DH
DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

India reaches out to Rahman ahead of B'desh polls

EAM Jaishankar hands over personal condolence letter to Khaleda's son

Page 12

Vodafone Idea gets govt relief over AGR dues

Dues frozen at Rs 87,695 cr; 5-yr moratorium for firm

BREATHER

- Gets flexibility to pay dues over a 10-year period
- Relief does not apply to AGR liabilities for FY 2017-18 and 2018-19
- Share slumps 11% as package not up to the market's expectations
- Market was anticipating a waiver of some sort

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Union government on Wednesday decided to freeze its adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues to the debt-ridden Vodafone Idea (Vi) at Rs 87,695 crore and granted the company a five-year moratorium from payment.

The telco has been given the flexibility to pay the dues over a 10-year period, from the financial year 2031-32 to 2040-41.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the relief package for the struggling telecom operator, in which the Centre owns 49% stake, sources said.

The relief measure does not apply to AGR liabilities pertaining to FY 2017-18 and 2018-19. AGR dues relate to annual licence fees and spectrum usage charges required to be paid by telecom operators to the government

The relief package was expected to have a positive impact on the company's balance sheet and the share price.

However, Vodafone Idea's share crashed by 15% after the reports related to AGR relief emerged.

Share price of Vodafone Idea hit its day's lower circuit of Rs 10.26 after rising to a 52-week high of Rs 12.80 in the afternoon trade.

The scrip ended the day 10.85% lower at Rs 10.76.

According to analysts, the government's relief package was not up to the market's expectations.

While the moratorium provides the company more time to make the payment, the market was anticipating a waiver of some sort.

Vodafone Idea's share price has almost doubled after hitting a low of Rs 6.12 apiece in August.

Despite Wednesday's fall it registered a gain of around 30% in 2025.

▸ Vodafone, Page 7

DH
CELEBRATING THE POWER OF GOOD
15
CHANGE MAKERS
To Watch In
2026
Read the stories of extraordinary individuals lighting up the path to a better tomorrow in the special pullout

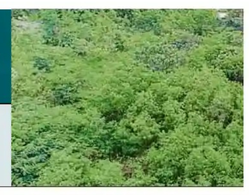
Govt in a fix over 'illegal' land lease order

Caught between losing face & HC hurdle in 2017 case

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

LAND TROUBLE

- In Dec 2017, state govt grants lease of 78 acres to various outfits
- In Jan 2018, the order is challenged in HC
- No grantee takes possession of the land
- Matter taken up twice by Cabinet, but deferred each time
- Govt is seeking to withdraw order without embarrassment



> The government should think twice before taking legal routes to denotify this land. There is no other green zone in the area where even the smallest pieces of farm lands are turning into paved layouts. - **A retired forest officer**

Eight years after issuing an order to lease out 78 acres of forest land in west Bengaluru to caste-associated organisations and five government utilities, the state government is doing everything possible to avoid the embarrassment of withdrawing the order, which violates Supreme Court verdicts related to status of forest lands.

While the grantees had proposed to convert the land into a build-up area, many others see the green patch as a vital lung space for the city. In the lucrative realty market, this land is estimated to fetch more than Rs 2,500 crore.

In December 2017, the then Congress government had decided to give land in survey number 81 in Machohalli to various organisations on a 30-year lease at a throw away price of Rs 1 lakh per acre per year. The order came when the upcoming election had heated up the political firmament.

However, the government order was challenged before the high court in January 2018, where petitioners noted that the land was declared as forest in 1896 by the erstwhile Maharaja of Mysore and recognised as a reserved forest.

▸ Lease, Page 7

Faridabad woman gang-raped in van, 2 held

FARIDABAD, PTI: A woman was allegedly gang-raped in a moving van through the night and thrown out of the speeding vehicle, suffering serious head and facial injuries, on a desolate road by two men who have since been arrested, police said on Wednesday.

The assault of the mother of three, which brings back the horror of the Nirbhaya rape on another cold December night 13 years ago, took place in the early hours of Tuesday on the winding, sparsely populated Gurgaon-Faridabad road.

The 25-year-old woman suffered severe injuries to head and her face, which required more than 12 stitches. Her condition is critical.

Details on Page 11

Cough syrups out of OTC bracket?

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Union Health Ministry has proposed removing cough syrups as an over-the-counter medicine while announcing a ban on the production, marketing and sale of a high dose of oral nimesulide, a common pain killer, because of safety concerns.

The ban on 100 mg oral nimesulide in immediate release dosage comes a year after the ICMR recommendation because of its safety concerns, which was accepted by the Drug Technical Advisory Board in April 2025.

Details on Page 7

NEW YEAR BASH

Revellers cheer as they welcome the New Year on Brigade Road, in Bengaluru, on Wednesday night. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

Deprived of central funds, village panchayats crippled

BHARATH JOSHI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Village panchayats across Karnataka step into the New Year with a crisis as none have received any money from the Centre under the 15th Finance Commission this fiscal, leaving them "struggling to take up development works", documents show.

The 6,000-odd panchayats in the state are due to receive over Rs 2,100 crore in the current fiscal in tax money devolved back to the state under the 15th Finance Commission.

Most panchayats depend on this money.

Details on Page 6

Covid: Cunha panel submits final report

BENGALURU, DHNS: The commission headed by Justice (retired) Michael Cunha, probing the alleged irregularities during the pandemic, submitted its final report to the government on Wednesday. It has suggested to release the report at the earliest.

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Ashoka demands NIA probe into Kogilu eviction incident

BENGALURU, DHNS: Leader of Opposition R Ashoka, who visited the Kogilu eviction site on Wednesday, said that the National Investigation Agency (NIA) should probe the incident.

"The government should verify the citizenship of illegal residents. It should be handed over to the NIA for investigation," he added.

After visiting the site, Ashoka opined that many of them there were not from Karnataka and the government was protecting them. He also noted that providing them a house would set a wrong precedent. "In Bengaluru, encroachments of 150 to 200 acres have been cleared in 40 places. Is it possible to build houses for all of them," Ashoka added.

He also pointed out that the government had failed to provide housing to those who lost their houses to floods. "Due to floods in the state, 13,999 houses have been damaged, and they have not been given houses. They are our own farmers' children, still homeless. Roofs of 2,400 schools have been blown away," Ashoka said.

BDA invites tenders for short tunnel & rotary flyover at Mehkri Circle

Agency sets January 2028 deadline for twin projects

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

File photo of slow moving traffic seen on Bellary Road near Mehkri Circle. The project will include a 2.25-km tunnel at the Hebbal Junction and a 1.7-km-long rotary flyover over Mehkri Circle.

BDA OFFICIAL

"...it was decided to introduce a rotary flyover at Mehkri Circle. After the commuters exit from the tunnel towards Mehkri Circle, they can climb the flyover and at the rotary exchange, they can take a left for Jayamahal Road and right for Sadashivanagar.

In two years, the traffic on the stretch between Hebbal and Mehkri Circle could come down significantly as the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) is aiming to complete the construction of a short tunnel and a rotary flyover to ease the traffic on the stretch.

The BDA has floated tenders for the project that was earlier this month approved by the state cabinet. The project will include a 2.25-km tunnel at the Hebbal Junction and a 1.7-km-long rotary flyover over Mehkri Circle. While the tunnel is expected to cost Rs 1,250 crore, the flyover will cost Rs 405 crore. The project will be completely funded by the BDA.

While the initial plan was only to have a tunnel from Hebbal flyover to Veterinary College via GKVK Campus, the traffic police alerted the BDA that the bottleneck would shift towards Mehkri circle. "Hence, it was decided to introduce a rotary flyover at Mehkri Circle. After the commuters exit from the tunnel towards Mehkri Circle, they can climb the flyover and at the rotary exchange, they can take a left for Jayamahal Road and right for Sadashivanagar," a senior BDA official explained.

Similarly those travelling towards the airport can also take the flyover and join the tunnel.

According to senior BDA officials, two separate tenders have been called for the tunnel and the flyover to expedite the work. "We want to ensure that the works happen simultaneously. This will help us complete the works at the earliest and also reduce inconvenience to the public," the official said.

The contractors will be given a two-year deadline to complete the works and the BDA is hoping that the project would be completed by early 2028. "We are hopeful that the works would be completed by January, 2028. However, there are a few challenges. During excavation, if they encounter a hard rock, it might take longer. Also, the tunnel has to pass through the railway line. We will need clearance for that as well," the official said.

Murder: Cops to send team to Bihar to trace firearm source

'Bihar, MP major hubs for unauthorised manufacture of firearms'

MANJUNATH SHETTAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru police have formed a special team to travel to Bihar to trace the source of the illegal firearm allegedly procured by a software engineer, who shot his wife over a divorce dispute in the Rajajinagar Industrial Area last week.

Based on disclosures made during the interrogation of the accused, S Balamurugan, bought illegal firearm dealers from Bihar to Bengaluru and he had confessed that he had paid Rs, 80,000 by travelling in train in July this year.

A senior police officer said that a team five officials will visit Bihar to track details of illegal fire arm dealers that was in contact with Balamuragan as a part of the investigation.

Meanwhile, investigators were unable to fully interrogate Balamurugan despite securing 14 days of police custody. With senior officers heavily deployed for New Year bandobust duties, crucial questioning remained incomplete, and the accused was remanded to judicial custody on Monday. Police sources said he would be taken back into custody after a week.

Senior ballistic expert B C Ravindra told *DH* that Bihar and Madhya Pradesh continue to be major hubs for the unauthorised manufacture of firearms. "Karnataka police have repeatedly failed to crack down on these dealers. Local intelligence networks rarely share inputs, and police teams often return empty-handed," he said.

Ravindra, who also assisted in the investigation of the Gauri Lankesh murder case, said the cost of manufacturing country-made firearms is less than Rs 4,000, but they are sold illegally for Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh. "As observed during spot mahazars, Bengaluru has fewer buyers, while Hubballi and Kalaburagi have seen a high demand, including from gangsters," he added.

It may be recalled that Selva Balamurugan (40), a software engineer, had 'meticulously planned' the murder of his estranged wife, Bhuvaneshwari (39). Police had revealed that he conducted extensive online research, carried out detailed Google searches, analysed data, and watched multiple videos to study different methods of killing before executing the crime. On December 23, he shot his wife Bhuvaneshwari, an assistant manager of a private bank near her residence in Rajajinagar Industrial area. He later walked into the Magadi Road police station and surrendered.

Earlier seizure

A year ago, the Hulimavu police arrested two brothers from Bihar during a routine check and seized two country-made pistols and four live rounds of ammunition. The accused were identified as Vidyananda Sahani (32) and his elder brother Premkumar Sahani (42).

Lokayukta raids BDA survey supervisor, unearths Rs 1.53 crore DA

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Lokayukta police officials raided the premises of a survey supervisor of Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) and unearthed Rs 1.53 crore in assets disproportionate (DA) to the official's known sources of income.

The simultaneous searches were held at the residences, office and residences of the relatives of Venkatesh D at more than five places.

During the searches, the officials found seven sites, one house, six acres and 20 guntas of agricultural land, all valued at Rs 90.77 lakh.

IN THE CITY

GENERAL

Bhima Koregaon Vijayotsava: Organised by Nagasena Vidyalaya, Samata Sainik Dal, RPI and other Dalit organisations; G Parameshwara and M Venkataswamy to participate; Nagasena Vidyalaya grounds, Sadashivanagar; 11 am

Music performance: Aparna Rao Srihari, Sri Harsha and Srikar Shivakumar; Pavamanapura Nanjangud Raghavendra Swamy Mutt; Mutt premises, Banashankari; 7 pm

Recital: 'Srihari Charithe' written by Pu Thi Narasimhachar; Sushma Santosh and Meenakshi Sreepad to perform; organised by Kannada Yuvajana Sangha; Sangha premises, H Siddaiah Road, Hombegowda Nagar; 6.30 pm.

CITY WEATHER

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with Light rain

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	28.6°C
Minimum	17.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	60%
Sunset (Jan 1)	6:04 pm
Sunrise (Jan 2)	6:41 am
Moonrise	2:54 pm
Moonset	3:10 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Bescom's new app to help monitor transformers, carry out preventive maintenance

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bescom has developed a new mobile application named 'Distribution Transformer Life Cycle Management System' (DTLMS) to monitor the state of the transformers in its jurisdiction. The move is expected to improve the quality of service and ensure uninterrupted power supply.

Energy Minister K J George said that the application would increase the life span of transformers. "Monitoring preventive maintenance of distribution transformers through the app will help us achieve our goal of providing an uninterrupted and quality power supply to consumers. Regular maintenance will also increase the lifespan of transformers," George said.

'Improve efficiency'

According to a statement by the Bescom, the move will help improve efficiency and reliability. "The app will help monitor and systematically carry out preventive maintenance of more than five lakh distribution transformers. Through the mobile application, officials can continuously monitor the operation, preventive maintenance, repairs, and efficiency of distribution transformers. Field officers can enter all transformer maintenance details directly into the app. Under DTLMS, a Distribution Transformer Centre (DTC) maintenance module has been developed. This module is expected to play a key role in improving the efficiency, reliability, and continuity of the power distribution system," the statement said.

"The app enables digital tracking of quarterly maintenance, fault reporting, repair details, condition monitoring, and history-based analysis. It also helps in faster decision-making at the field level, reducing fault repair time, and optimizing resource usage," said Dr N Shivashankara, MD, Bescom.

NCB busts int'l khat trafficking syndicate in B'luru

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Wednesday said that it has busted an international syndicate trafficking Khat leaves and operating from Bengaluru.

The operation led to the seizure of approximately 160 kg of Khat leaves, valued at around Rs 8 crore.

This is the largest seizure of Khat in Karnataka since its inclusion as a psychotropic substance under the NDPS Act in 2018, the NCB said.

"Preliminary investigation indicates that the contraband was smuggled into India through an international route originating from Ethiopia to India via Kenya, pointing to the involvement of a well-organised transnational drug syndicate operating across more than 20 countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, and the Middle East. The syndicate sent over 550 parcels weighing approximately 2,100 kg to North America, Europe, the Gulf countries and the Middle East," the NCB said.

"Information on the in-transit parcels is being shared with agencies in respective countries for action at their end. NCB has taken strict action against the traffickers of Khat leaves, psychotropic drugs, despite being a less popular/consumed drug in India. Further investigation revealed that the syndicate was using the international postal and courier system to import bulk consignments of Khat, camouflaged as routine commercial items such as tea," it added.

The agency further claimed that the network operated through multiple layers, using storage and distribution points within Bengaluru to break bulk and distribute smaller quantities. The syndicate comprised predominantly foreign nationals, assisted by local facilitators, with several members residing in India under the guise of student and medical visas, the NCB said.

Separately, the agency also said that during 2025, it seized 490 kilograms of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including Hydroponic Ganja (244 kg), Cannabis (63 kg), Cocaine (2 kg), Methamphetamine (10.5 kg), Psilocybin (6 kg), Khat Leaves (162.5 kg), LSD (808 blots), MDMA (53 units) and other prohibited substances, with an estimated international market value of Rs 270 crore. A total of 81 persons, including 07 foreign nationals, were arrested, the agency said.

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93641 04366

11 DAYS

United Kingdom

DUBLIN, Trinity College. BELFAST, Titanic Museum, Ferry from Belfast to Glasgow, GLASGOW, EDINBURGH, Edinburgh Castle, LAKE WINDERMERE, Cruise on Lake Windermere, MANCHESTER, OXFORD, Oxford University, LONDON, Madame Tussauds, Ride on London Eye, Tower of London, Oval Cricket Stadium, Cruise on River Thames.

DATES: APR 7, 21. MAY 5, 26. JUN 9, 23. JUL 14, 28. AUG 11, 25. SEP 15, 29. OCT 13, 27. NOV 10.

70222 59008

10 DAYS

Scandinavia

HELSINKI, Senate Square, Uspensiki Cathedral, Cruise Silja to Stockholm, STOCKHOLM, Royal Vasa Ship Museum, City Hall, Drottningholm Palace, NORWAY IN NUTSHELL, Ride on the Flamsbana - The most scenic railway journey, Fjord cruise to Copenhagen, OSLO, Top of Holmenkollen Ski Jump, Vigeland Sculpture Park, COPENHAGEN, The Iconic Little Mermaid.

DATES: MAY 15, 29. JUN 12, 26. JUL 10, 24. AUG 14, 28. SEP 4, 18.

93641 04373

11 DAYS

East Europe

MUNICH, BMW Welt, BERLIN, Topography of Terror Museum, Little Big city Berlin, DRESDEN, PRAGUE, The Charles Bridge, Old Town Square, Czeski Krumlov, VIENNA, Schönbrunn Palace, BRATISLAVA, BUDAPEST, Hungarian Horse Show, Cruise on River Danube, ZAGREB, SLOVEINA, Ljubljana, Photostop at Lake Bled, ZELL AM SEE

DATES: APR 3, 17. MAY 8, 22. JUN 5, 19. JUL 3, 17. AUG 7, 21. SEP 4, 18. OCT 2, 16. NOV 6, 13.

93641 04373

10 DAYS

Portugal & Spain

LISBON, Sintra & Cascais, SEVILLE, Flamenco Show, TOLEDO, Sword Factory, MADRID, Santiago Bernabeu, VALENCIA, BARCELONA, Montjuic Cable Car, Sagrada Family, La Rambla, MARSEILLES, CANNES, NICE, Promenade des Anglais.

DATES: APR 3, 17. MAY 8, 22. JUN 5, 19. JUL 3, 17. AUG 7, 21. SEP 4, 18. OCT 2, 16. NOV 6, 13.

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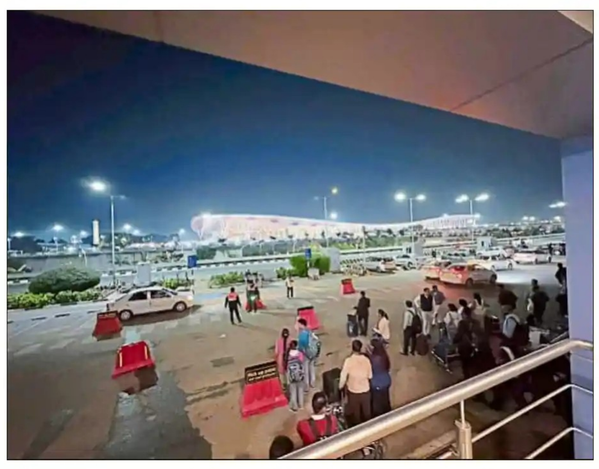
KIA introduces premium pickup zone; Rs 275 for 10-minute slot

Overstaying vehicles to be towed to nearest police station

BENGALURU, DHNS

Kempegowda International Airport has introduced a "premium pickup zone," which allows yellow board vehicles to access the arrivals pickup lane at Terminal 1 at a fee of Rs 275 for a 10-minute slot. Plus, there is a Rs 150 charge for every additional five minutes.

The new zone was soft-launched on Sunday. If a cab driver spends 15 minutes at this new pickup zone, which is located on the fifth lane by the arrivals gates, they will be charged Rs 425. The lane is geared towards passengers who prefer kerb-side pickup, rather than walking towards the designated parking zone at P3 and P4, said an airport representative.



The introduction of the new lane has further heightened the criticism from cab drivers. FILE PHOTO

Any vehicle that stays unattended or uses the premium pickup zone for more than 15 minutes will be towed to the nearest police station at the owner's cost, reads a board set up by the fifth lane, which is located adjacent to Mitti Cafe and Shri Sagar.

On December 26, Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) announced a proposal to impose a Rs 275 pickup charge for corporate taxis, but withdrew it soon after. However, the airport operator quietly rolled out the new lane on December 28.

Despite the widespread backlash over the new pickup rules, BIAL has stood its ground and shared that the imposition of the new rules would be monitored for 30 days.

The introduction of the new lane has further heightened the criticism from cab drivers. "It's as if they're rubbing it in our face that we can't afford to access these lanes. No passenger will be willing to spend such a high fee. With the new pickup rules in place, our livelihood has already been hit. We don't know if we should stick around to see if there are any changes or just start taking rides within the city," said Raheem, a 51-year-old cab driver.

Several passengers have also taken to social media, calling out the airport authorities for the high fee. An online petition to roll back the new pickup charges at the airport has garnered 1,572 signatures so far.

"It's surprising that one of the most well-known airports in the country is haphazardly bringing in such rules without proper research. The ground reality is that passengers are against it," said Hareesh Amjuri, who started the petition earlier this month.

Uphold public trust, journos told; 5 from DH-PV get PCB awards

BENGALURU, DHNS: Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti on Wednesday called upon the journalistic community to work according to their conscience, asserting that those who maintain integrity need not fear any external pressures.

Speaking at the Press Club of Bengaluru's (PCB) annual awards ceremony, Horatti emphasised the enduring significance of the Fourth Estate. "The media continues to hold a unique and vital position in society. There is a deep-rooted belief that if any real social transformation is to occur, it must be driven by the media. Journalists must strive to protect this public trust and focus on bringing about positive change," he said.

Recalling his efforts to improve media access to democratic proceedings, Horatti noted that he had stepped in during a period of confusion when television media was restricted from entering the Legislative Council. "I personally ensured that arrangements were made so that session footage was accessible to all. This has allowed the people of the state to witness the proceedings of the House through your lenses," he added.

KV Prabhakar, Media Advisor to the chief minister, who was conferred with a special award, highlighted the government's commitment to the welfare of journalists. He announced that a spacious new building for the Press Club of Bangalore would be constructed on a one-acre plot in Hosakerehalli, sanctioned with the support of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

The event saw the presentation of the "Person of the Year" and annual awards for 2025 to 53 journalists for their professional contributions. Among the recipients were K J Mariappa, R Manjunath, Madhukeshwar Jawali, B V Srinath, and Manjushree Kadakol from *Deccan Herald* and *Prajavani*.

A special award was also conferred upon Belagavi Superintendent of Police Bhimashankar Guled, which was received on his behalf by his mother, Parvati Shamrao.

The ceremony was attended by MLA K Shadakshari, Jawahar Bal Bhavan Society Chairman B R Naidu, Press Club President R Sridhar, and General Secretary M D Shivakumar Bellithatte, among other dignitaries.

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Ejipura link road: Environmentalists concerned over tree felling

BENGALURU, DHNS: As the construction begins of a link road from Ejipura junction to Agara, the environmentalists are worried about the felling of old trees in the area. About 72 trees have been markeds by the authorities for felling, the activists said.

The road is being constructed to ease the traffic on Koramangala 80 Feet Road and further towards Ibluru junction. The land for the road is provided by the Ministry of Defence after long negotiations, said the activists.

Speaking to *DH*, Vinod Jacob, environmentalist, said, "Most of the trees are on the sides of the road and not in the way of the project. The ones that are in the middle of the road can be relocated to the defense land. Cutting all the trees is not necessary"

"This road can be connected directly to HSR and Agara which can reduce traffic burden on Koramangala road," said environmentalist Avanti Rao. Another environmentalist, Alexander James said, "The road will be open only for two-wheelers and cars. The road is being built in the buffer zone and removal of trees will destroy the water holding capacity of the soil, making the soil weak."

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The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA)
(Ministry of Corporate Affairs)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Niveshak Shivir

The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA), operating under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), is launching Niveshak Shivir – a dedicated initiative to address the concerns and queries of claimants across India.

Objective

Niveshak Shivir aims to simplify investor services, promote financial literacy and strengthen investor protection to:

- Facilitate the transfer of unpaid dividends (held for 6–7 years).
- Assisting with KYC and nomination updates with the company.
- Resolving pending IEPFA claims of unclaimed and unpaid shares and dividends.

Scheduled City

To take this vision forward, Niveshak Shivir will be organised in **Bengaluru.**

Event Details

Date/Time: 03rd January 2026, 10:00 a.m. to 04:00 p.m.
Venue: Sri Y Muniswaamappa Kalyaana Mantapa,
17, Tumkur Rd, near Gopal Theatre, Dr.Ambedkar Nagar, Yeswanthpur, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560022

How to Participate

Please register by scanning the QR code provided in this notice or by clicking on the link:**https://qr.me-qr.com/l/NiveshakShivir**
This registration will help us ensure that you have received the most effective and timely assistance in Niveshak Shivir.

For More Information

Please visit our official website at www.iepf.gov.in. You can also follow us on our social media channels for the latest updates and announcements related to Niveshak Shivir.

We encourage all claimants to take advantage of this opportunity to have their concerns addressed directly by our experts. Your engagement is crucial in helping us provide better service and support.

Toll Free Number : 14453 | Call Centre: Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

www.iepf.gov.in

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City welcomes the New Year with a bang, but under watchful eyes of police

Effective crowd control mechanism put in place

PRAJWAL D'SOUZA, MANJUNATH SHETTAR & PUSHKAR V
BENGALURU, DHNS

As the evening dawned on Wednesday, revellers flocked to popular spots in Bengaluru to celebrate the New Year.

A festive mood prevailed on MG Road, Brigade Road junction and Church Street with large crowds gathering under tight security arrangements.

Continuous public safety announcements echoed across the central business district as police personnel regulated the swelling crowd. However, directions issued by the police to pubs and restaurants to strictly control sound levels were largely ignored.

On Church Street, loud music from pubs drowned out official announcements, prompting police to seize speakers from a couple of establishments after repeated warnings. Several customers were seen standing outside pubs on Church Street.

As part of crowd-control measures, street vendors, including flower sellers and chaat vendors, were restricted from operating in the area. Entry points at major junctions were barricaded with temporary safety gates, where people carrying handbags and backpacks were denied entry as a precautionary measure.

Shops close early

Shops along Brigade Road were asked to shut by 8 pm as crowds began gathering in large numbers.

Indiranagar, Kalyan Nagar, J P Nagar and Koramangala weren't far behind on the celebrations. Crowds swelled up in all these areas known for some of their popular partying establishments, a little after 9 pm, as police personnel kept a watchful eye.

The city police, led by Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh, left no stone unturned when it came to matters of security. Police personnel ensured that no one entered the premises without passing checks and frisking.

Unlike the previous years, crowds were managed better, leading to less congestion, especially in Koramangala. Emergency vehicles, police units and controlled and regulated access systems were implemented successfully to prevent overcrowding.

Designated holding areas were also marked to manage crowd density temporarily. Public announcements were largely effective in guiding the crowd, which moved through barricaded roads and clear signs.

Apart from the dedicated women's help desks and improved presence of female officials, dedicated safe zones with seating and lying down facilities ensured safety for women and young adults.

Indiranagar, too, saw revellers flocking in large numbers, with many of them having bookings to enter pubs and similar establishments. Large lines were seen outside pubs with eager patrons waiting for their entry.

Fall in bookings on ride aggregator apps

Throughout December 31, bookings on ride aggregator apps like Ola, Uber and Rapido remained fewer than normal said D Rudramurthy, General Secretary, ARDU.

"A major chunk of the city's population is out of town, so there was no surge in bookings," he told *DH*. Even post sundown, rides bookings carried on at regular pace, said auto drivers. "I got stuck in a traffic jam on Hebbal, but it was just for 10 minutes. Other than that, there hasn't been much traffic in north Bengaluru, so I'm sticking to this side," said Mohammed Haroon, an auto driver.

A large crowd gathered at Koramangala at midnight to usher in the New Year. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Better crowd control and management

This year saw an improvement in crowd management, especially in Koramangala, where congestion was an issue. Heavy deployment of personnel and adequate lighting were in place, similar to MG Road, Brigade Road and Church Street. Poorvika, 26, a resident of Ejipura, said,

"This is the third year I am visiting with my friends, and it's refreshing to see the arrangement this year."

A few others echoed similar sentiments regarding the arrangements. "We feel much safer and relaxed, helping us celebrate better," said a reveller in Indiranagar, who did not wish to be named.

Massive deployment

- Nearly 20,000 personnel were deployed across the city as part of the New Year's Eve bandobast. Vehicle movement on MG Road and Brigade Road was allowed initially, as the crowd density remained manageable till around 11 pm, officials said.
- As many as 14,000 law and order personnel, 2,500 traffic police, 88 KSRP platoons, 21 CAR units, 266 Hoysala vehicles, 250 Cobra vehicles and 400 traffic wardens, along with civil defence and home guards. Crowd control arrangements include water jets, and watch towers were deployed across the city.
- Fire tenders, ambulances and water jets were stationed at strategic locations along with anti-stampede squads, Bomb Detection and Disposal Squads and anti-sabotage teams.

Revellers usher in the New Year 2026, celebrating with cheers and raised hands along Brigade Road in Bengaluru on Wednesday night.

Police put in place an effective crowd management the during New Year celebrations on MG Road.
DH PHOTO/JANARDHAN B K

Early closure of metro station hits commuters

The city police had said that the MG Road Metro Station would close at 10 pm. People working in the CBD, who boarded the Metro, complained about not being allowed to use the MG Road station via Church Street entrance, and about not being allowed to walk towards the MG Road entrance from Brigade Road. Pranathi, a regular Bengaluru Metro user, said that the Mahatma Gandhi Road metro station was blocked from both the Church Street entrance/exit as well as from the MG Road exit/entrance from as early as 9.30 pm.

A reveller with her pet during New Year celebrations at Koramangala. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Pubs, bars and restaurants clock in brisk business

Bars in Bagalur, Koramangala saw housefull night, in CBD they struggled

ASHWIN B M & PUSHKAR V
BENGALURU, DHNS

The neon lights of Bengaluru's premier party hubs masked a night of mixed fortunes for the city's beverage industry as it ushered in 2026.

While suburban bars in Bagalur and Koramangala celebrated a housefull night, establishments in the Central Business District (CBD) struggled against stringent police regulations and a notably non-static crowd.

The crowd this year was comparatively thinner than last year's celebrations and was kept in constant motion by a strong police presence. While this ensured safety, it proved a nightmare for businesses in the heart of the city.

"The crowd was purely flowing; police didn't allow anyone to stand or gather near our entrance. If people can't stop, they don't enter," said a manager of a popular pub adjacent to the MG Road Metro. Access through Brigade Road was strictly one-way, meaning those who walked down could not return, cutting off the usual late-night walk-ins.

Koramangala packed

In Koramangala, the atmosphere was more electric as thousands gathered on Wednesday night. Pubs were seen packed to capacity, with a heavy presence of both police personnel and private bouncers managing the influx.

While many venues operated on an advance-booking-only basis, a few offered on-spot entry at a steep premium. "On-spot prices at a pub hit Rs 3,499 for stag men, Rs 2,499 for women, and Rs 4,000 for couples," reported one party goer.

Price hikes and 'Desperation'

In Indiranagar and Hebbal, bar owners noted a trend of encashing people's eagerness to party. While some establishments maintained nominal menu rates, many were called out for charging skyrocketing prices especially at CBD areas like Church Street, MG Road and Brigade Road.

A ground visit to CBD areas revealed several bars completely overcharging. One reveller lamented, "They were just charging whatever they wanted because the demand was high." In Bagalur and Kalyan Nagar, however, owners reported good vibes and good business, noting they had employed extra staff to control the crowd.

Despite the high-tech police monitoring using drones and AI heat maps, basic civic amenities were non-existent. The lack of movable toilets became a major concern as many people were seen urinating in public near major hot spots.

Gig workers strike fizzles out in city

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

The nationwide gig worker strike did not cause any major disruptions in Bengaluru, as delivery agents continued working throughout the day, lured in by the heightened incentives by aggregator platforms, such as Swiggy and Zomato, among others.

While a few workers stuck to the 'App Bandh' strike on December 31, called by national gig worker unions, the Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers (IFAT), and the Gig and Platform Service Workers Union (GIPSWU), in protest of the "unethical 10-minute delivery model" and the lack of job security, for a majority it was regular workday. Only minor disruptions were noted in parts of North and East Bengaluru.

Several delivery personnel remained unaware of the strike. "I had no idea that such a strike was taking place today. Irrespective, I wouldn't miss work today as the delivery platforms have rolled out special incentives for New Year's Eve," said Iqbal, a 25-year-old working for Swiggy.

For others, feeding the family took precedence over supporting their peers. "Are our working conditions bad? Yes. But when I'm not getting any other job, I can't afford to lose this one. I have the opportunity to earn more today, so I took it. My family needs the money," said Pappu Kumar, who has been working with Blinkit for the past eight months.

To encourage delivery professionals, platforms, like Swiggy and Zomato rolled out heightened incentives across the city. Swiggy ran a promotional 'Double Earnings' offer, advertising earnings of Rs 2,175 for 19 orders, within a period of six hours between 6 pm and 12 am. The gig workers had the option of rejecting only one order during the time period.

Zomato also offered a pay of Rs 90 between 6 and 10 pm, on the condition that delivery agents log in for a minimum period of three and a half hours between 6 pm and 12 am.

"This goes to show that these platforms are capable of paying their employees rightfully, they just don't want to do it. If similar incentives are provided throughout the year, it will help delivery agents earn a decent livelihood," said Prashant Sawardekar, founder and national president of IFAT.

The strike, however, saw widespread support from citizens, with many vowing not to order in on New Year's Eve.

Demands of gig workers

- Fair and adequate wages
- Prohibit 10-minute delivery
- Regulation of platform companies under labour laws
- Comprehensive social security coverage
- End to arbitrary ID blocking and algorithmic punishment

JD(S) petitions Guv to refuse assent to Hate Speech bill

BENGALURU, DHNS: A delegation of JD(S) leaders called on Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to submit a petition urging him to withhold assent to the Hate Speech and Hate Crimes Bill that the Congress government recently passed in the Winter Session of the state legislature.

The delegation, led by the party's floor leader in the Assembly C B Suresh Babu, argued that the bill, in its current form posed a significant threat to the Freedom of Speech and Expression, enshrined in Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution.

The JD(S) leaders urged Gehlot to exercise his Constitutional discretion and refuse his assent to the bill. The regional party argued that provisions of the bill could be misused to suppress dissent, besides underscoring the possibility of some of its clauses being in contravention of rights guaranteed by the Constitution. "The bill does not guarantee protection for individual dignity, which is fundamental to democratic accountability," the petition said.

JD(S) core committee president Krishna Reddy said that the bill reflected the Congress government's skewed priorities. "Instead of addressing citizens' problems, the government is interested in this bill that snatches the right that guarantees Freedom of Speech and Expression. We have petitioned the Governor, and in the coming days, will launch an agitation to protest the bill," said Reddy.

Kogilu: BJP forms fact-finding committee

BENGALURU, DHNS: BJP state president B Y Vijayendra on Wednesday formed a seven-member fact-finding committee to "uncover the facts" behind the destruction of houses at Kogilu Layout in North Bengaluru.

The committee comprises MLAs S R Vishwanath and S Muniraju, MLC K S Naveen, party state general secretary Thammesh Gowda, state vice-president Malavika Avinash, district president S Harish and former Bengaluru Police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao.

The BJP has opposed the government's decision to provide houses to those whose houses were demolished, alleging that they were "illegal immigrants" from Bangladesh. The party has sought a high-level probe to find out the antecedents of the residents.

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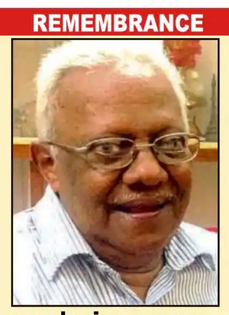

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S. VARGHESE
28.10.1938 - 01-01-2015
Beloved Husband, Father, Grandfather and Friend.
Remembered by Family members

Houses for 'illegal settlers': Somanna slams Siddaramaiah govt

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Slamming Karnataka government for its decision to provide houses to illegal settlers, Union Minister of State for Railways V Somanna on Wednesday said that the Siddaramaiah-led government is setting a dangerous precedent in the state.

A woman walks on demolition debris in Kogilu.

"After clearly stating that we have cleared houses on encroached land, what is the ulterior motive behind promising to build new houses for the 'affected' by the New Year?" Somanna told the media persons here.

"If those who illegally built layouts are being called victims, then what will be the Congress government's decision on providing houses to the countless homeless people, nomadic labourers, and working-class individuals in North Karnataka, who are still struggling without shelter? What moral right does Chief Minister Siddaramaiah have to brand the officers—who demolished the houses only after serving proper notices—as 'guilty' and declare strict action against them," he asked.

"Instead of focusing on the development of Kannadigas, Siddaramaiah is dancing to the tune of the high command and has decided to allot houses to non-Kannadigas. This is nothing but an injustice to the people of the state," Somanna said.

Criticising the state government for not releasing its share in the Jal Jeevan Mission—a centrally sponsored scheme to provide tap water to rural households—Somanna said, "Despite repeated requests from the Jal Shakti Ministry, the state government is not cooperating."

Somanna, also the minister of state for Jal Shakti, said the Jal Shakti Ministry has sought detailed documents from the state in connection with the Upper Bhadra Project. However, the state is not willing to share them. If the state provides the documents, it can take steps to release funds, he added.

Greens allege violations in Sharavathi pumped storage project

NBWL members visit site, receive grievances

BENGALURU, DHNS

Wildlife conservationists and experts presented a list of alleged illegalities to members of the National Board of Wildlife (NBWL) over the procedure followed to obtain clearances for the pumped storage project in the Sharavathi Valley Lion-tailed Macaque (LTM) Sanctuary.

The Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL) proposal, which seeks diversion of 131.81 acres of forest land in the valley to build a powerhouse between two dams, has attracted widespread criticism.

Acting on a direction from the NBWL Standing Committee, a three-member panel, including board members H S Singh and Raman Sukumar, visited the site and received grievances from conservationists and experts at a meeting held in Sagar.

Five major concerns

Activist Akhilesh Chipli said there were five major concerns, ranging from procedural illegalities to deliberate obfuscation.

Referring to information obtained under the Right to Information Act, he said KPCL was creating a fait accompli by not disclosing the requirement of an additional 58.8 hectares (145.29 acres) of forest land to build transmission lines.

As per rules, disclosure of the full scope of a project is an essential part of the clearance process, as it helps assess its overall impact.

"Power evacuation is not part of the present project and will come as a separate project subsequently. According to the Hon'ble Supreme Court judgment dated July 6, 2011, in the Lafarge Umiam Mining Pvt Ltd case (Writ Petition (Civil) 202 of 1995), this proposal will lead to a fait accompli, as the transmission lines and the power plant are two essential parts of a single power project," Chipli noted.

Secondly, he said, KPCL had inflated the project's cost-benefit (CB) ratio to 2,643, which was later revised to 75 after questions were raised by central authorities.

Even the revised figure, he said, was based on "irrational considerations", as KPCL calculated only the cost of forest land. "Considering the project cost and the water pumping cost, the actual CB ratio will be less than one, which suggests the project is economically not viable," he said.

Thirdly, Chipli said the degradation of the forest would affect its carbon sequestration capacity, an aspect that had not been adequately considered. The fourth and fifth concerns related to the failure to examine alternatives to the project and the potential destabilisation of the Sharavathi valley.

Landslide vulnerability

Vrukshalaksha Andolana activist Anant Hegde Ashisar questioned the absence of the senior Forest Department officials at the meeting.

"The department has recommended the project without even examining the detailed project report. We have urged NBWL members to reject the project in all its forms," he said.

Ashisar added that the government has failed to consider the landslide vulnerability of the Western Ghats, the ecological sensitivity of the valley, and the damage caused by past hydropower and linear infrastructure projects.

Sapthagiri NPS University holds project expo

(Left to right) Dr Shantaram Nayak, Dr Siva Shanmugam, Dr Praveen Kumar, Dr H Ramakrishna, Dr N C Mahendra Babu and Dr Rekha S N.

The School of Engineering and Technology, Sapthagiri NPS University, held 'Project Expo 2025–26' where 450 projects from various departments were showcased. Students presented innovative projects across hardware and software, aimed at providing practical solutions to real-world problems.

The event was inaugurated by Dr H Ramakrishna, Registrar, Sapthagiri NPS University. "In every semester, students have both theory and practical subjects. Through project work, they get an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learnt. This helps us understand their thinking process and creativity. Such exposure will also support them in securing employment or becoming entrepreneurs".

Dr N C Mahendra Babu, Dean, School of Engineering and Technology, said, "Students should integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their projects wherever possible. However, AI alone is not a complete solution - it can only assist. Students must develop innovative ideas to address real-world challenges."

Sapthagiri NPS University's Associate Dean - School of Engineering and Technology Dr Shantaram Nayak, Dean - School of Management Dr Siva Shanmugam, Director - Dept of Artificial intelligence and Data Science Dr Praveen Kumar, Director - Dept of Electrical and Electronics Engineering Dr Rekha S N, along with faculty members and students, attended the event.

Curated by DH Brandspot

Days after demolition row, Siddu, Pinarayi share stage

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Close on the heels of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan criticising the Karnataka government over the demolition of houses at Fakir Colony and Waseem Layout in Bengaluru, Vijayan and his Karnataka counterpart Siddaramaiah shared a stage in the city on Wednesday.

The two chief ministers did not mention the demolition of houses. Still, they stressed the relevance of the preaching of social reformer Narayana Guru amidst attempts to create religious and communal divides.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan greets Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the 93rd Sivagiri pilgrimage programme at the Sivagiri Mutt in Varkala, Kerala, on Wednesday. PTI PHOTO

Vijayan and Siddaramaiah were speaking at the 93rd pilgrimage programme of the Sivagiri Mutt in Thiruvananthapuram, which was founded by Narayana Guru (1856-1928). Siddaramaiah, who was the chief guest at the event, said that dividing people on the basis of religion and caste was the biggest injustice.

"The politics of creating division should be rejected. Religious leaders should speak against hatred. Karnataka government is following Narayana Guru's ideologies of equality," he said. He also hailed the contributions of Narayana Guru in the fight against discrimination and the stress given to education, skill development and women empowerment.

Vijayan, in his inaugural address, said that the people should be cautious against attempts by vested interest groups to distort and hijack the philosophies of Narayana Guru.

"A theocratic state is totally against the vision and preaching of Narayana Guru. Hence, no true devotee of Narayana Guru will go in the way of those who are advocating for a theocratic state. We must remain vigilant against covert efforts to confine the Guru within the boundaries of any single caste or religion. The left-front government in Kerala is following the preaching of Narayana Guru," Vijayan said.

Vijayan's statement assumed significance as the CPM has been openly expressing concerns over the flow of Hindu-Ezhava votes to the BJP over the last couple of elections.

Hence, Pinarayi's statements highlighting the ideologies of Narayana Guru, who was born in an Ezhava family, could be seen as an attempt to influence the Ezhava vote banks.

Vijayan's critical remarks against the demolition of houses at Fakir Colony and Waseem Layout by terming it as another form of the anti-minority moves by Sangh Parivar outfits in northern states had triggered strong criticism from Congress leaders.

Karnataka deputy chief minister D K Shivakumar had accused Vijayan of showing sympathy towards minorities for political gain.

Sunita Williams to deliver keynote address at KLF 2026

BENGALURU, DHNS

Renowned NASA astronaut and former Commander of the International Space Station (ISS), Sunita Williams, is set to be a key speaker at the ninth edition of the Kerala Literature Festival (KLF) in 2026.

The announcement was made by the festival organisers. The four-day event is scheduled to be held from January 22 to 25, 2026, along the iconic Kozhikode beachfront. Williams, a global icon of space exploration with over 300 days in orbit and multiple spacewalk records, is expected to share her experiences on resilience, leadership, and the pursuit of discovery.

"Sunita Williams represents the courage to explore the unknown," said Ravi Deecee, Chief Facilitator of KLF. "Her participation will inspire audiences across generations."

The 2026 edition will feature Germany as the guest nation. The festival, hosted in India's first UNESCO 'City of Literature', is expected to draw over 500 speakers.

The star-studded lineup includes: Nobel Laureates Abdulrazak Gurnah, Olga Tokarczuk, and Abhijit Banerjee; Olympian Ben Johnson; business leader Indra Nooyi; artist and illustrator Cheyenne Olivier; writer Gabriela Ybarra; economist Arvind Subramanian; linguist and author Peggy Mohan; author and columnist Shobhaa De; writer and former diplomat Amish Tripathi; actor and singer Piyush Mishra; curator Helen Molesworth; writer and activist Banu Mushtaq; writer and journalist Deepa Bhasthi; celebrated essayist Pico Iyer; renowned environmental activist Vandana Shiva; Jnanpith award-winning writer Pratibha Ray; eminent historian Romila Thapar; acclaimed novelist Anita Nair; noted Telugu author Volga; conservation biologist Neha Sinha; actor and social commentator Prakash Raj; author-diplomat Pavan K Varma; author, parliamentarian, and public intellectual Shashi Tharoor; Indian comedian Vir Das; and Tamil film director and activist Pa Ranjith, among many others.

Together, these voices span literature, science, sports, economics, politics, cinema, art, and culture.

Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka

KARNATAKA STATE MINERALS CORPORATION LIMITED
BENGALURU

Shri D K Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka

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and may this Sankranti Festive Reap Rich Harvest
and Embrace New Beginnings

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Shri S. S. Mallikarjun
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Best Wishes from:
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Hon'ble MLA, Ron Legislative Assembly
and Chairman, Karnataka State
Minerals Corporation Ltd

Shri Basavaraju, KAS
Managing Director
Karnataka State Minerals Corporation Ltd

Rlys launches app for unified passenger services

MYSURU, DHNS: Indian Railways has launched the RailOne mobile application, a comprehensive and passenger-centric digital platform that brings together a wide range of railway services under a single interface.

"The initiative aims to enhance convenience, transparency and efficiency, offering passengers a seamless and user-friendly travel experience," said Girish Dharmaraj Kalagonda, Divisional Commercial Manager, South Western Railways, Mysuru Division.

He said the app enables passengers to conveniently book reserved and unreserved tickets, as well as platform pickets, ensuring ease of access for both travelers and visitors. In addition, the app facilitates train search, journey planning through the 'Journey Planner,' and real-time PNR status updates, helping passengers plan and manage their journeys effectively.

To ensure a smooth travel experience, the app provides features such as real-time train running status, coach position information and train location tracking, enabling passengers to navigate stations with ease.

Denied central funds, panchayats face financial crisis

Delay stalls development works, says Karnataka

15th FC grants
(2020-21 to 2025-26)
- Allocation: **Rs 15,756 cr**
- Release: **Rs 11,905.89 cr**
- Deficit: **Rs 3,850.11 cr**
- First installment of 2025-26 due - **Rs 1,092 cr**

BHARATH JOSHI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Village panchayats across Karnataka step into the New Year with a crisis as none have received any money from the Centre under the 15th Finance Commission this fiscal, leaving them "struggling to take up development works", documents show.

The 6,000-odd panchayats are due to receive over Rs 2,100 crore in the current fiscal in tax money devolved back to the state under the 15th Finance Commission. Most panchayats depend on this money.

The state should have received Rs 1,092 crore in the first installment, which has not come.

"Karnataka being a forerunner in rural decentralisation, panchayats today are struggling to take up development works due to lack of funds," Rural Development & Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Minister Priyank Kharge has stated in a letter to his Union government counterpart Rajiv Ranjan Singh.

Authorities are baffled by the inordinate delay in fund release given that Karnataka has met all prerequisites, including submission of gram panchayat development plans.

Even Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, which keep clashing with the Union government -- like Karnataka -- over federal matters, have received grants.

The delay has "stalled development works across gram panchayats in the state", Panchayat Raj secretary Randeep D stated in a missive to Union Secretary Vivek Bharadwaj.

What's worse, the term of elected village panchayat members ends in January. Funds are not released without elected bodies in place. Since 2022, district and taluk panchayats are not receiving the 15th Finance Commission grants as elections have not been held.

Besides the delay in fund release, over 800 village panchayats are facing "multiple technical issues" making them "unable to initiate payments" for the past one month, according to RDPR Secretary Sameer Shukla's letter to the Union panchayat raj ministry seeking resolution.

These panchayats had their accounts for the 15th Finance Commission grants in the Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB) and Pragathi Krishna Grameen Bank (PKGB). Both banks were recently merged with the Karnataka Grameen Bank.

Panchayats had to update and map the new IFSC codes with the Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and the e-Gram Swaraj portal. But this has led to glitches.

"Right now, many gram panchayats have no money left," one RDPR official aware of the situation said. "Some panchayats have no money for water supply, too."

JD(S) petitions Guv to refuse assent to Hate Speech bill

BENGALURU, DHNS

A delegation of JD(S) leaders called on Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to submit a petition urging him to withhold assent to the Hate Speech and Hate Crimes Bill that the Congress government recently passed in the Winter Session of the state legislature.

The delegation, led by the party's floor leader in the Assembly C B Suresh Babu, argued that the bill, in its current form posed a significant threat to the Freedom of Speech and Expression, enshrined in Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution.

The JD(S) leaders urged Gehlot to exercise his Constitutional discretion and refuse his assent to the bill. The regional party argued that provisions of the bill could be misused to suppress dissent, besides underscoring the possibility of some of its clauses being in contravention of rights guaranteed by the Constitution. "The bill does not guarantee protection for individual dignity, which is fundamental to democratic accountability," the petition said.

JD(S) core committee president Krishna Reddy said that the bill reflected the Congress government's skewed priorities. "Instead of addressing citizens' problems, the government is interested in this bill that snatches the right that guarantees Freedom of Speech and Expression. We have petitioned the Governor, and in the coming days, will launch an agitation to protest the bill," said Reddy.

RSS hosts overseas Pracharaks meet in Anegundi

HOSAPETE (VIJAYANAGAR DISTRICT), DHNS: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) overseas Pracharaks from 23 countries, led by Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale, on Wednesday visited the Vijaya Vittala temple complex at the Unesco World Heritage Centre Hampi.

The overseas Pracharaks have come to attend the three-day RSS Chintan-Manthan at Anegundi. They took time out of the brainstorming session to visit the Hampi.

They are working on spreading the RSS' Hindu nationalist ideology and community building among the diaspora.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

A view of Mangaluru as seen during Heli Ride organised as part of Karavali Utsava in Mangaluru on Wednesday. DH PHOTO/FAKRUDDIN H

Male tiger rescued; search continues for tigress, 4 cubs

CHAMARAJANAGAR, DHNS: The Forest department has rescued a tiger that attacked livestock and created panic among the people of Kalpura and the surrounding villages, on Tuesday night.

A 7-year-old male tiger was safely captured near Anemadu lake, near Veeranapura, and has been released into the tiger core area, according to Forest department officials.

The Forest department observed the movement of a tiger through thermal drones at around 6 pm on Tuesday.

A team led by DCF Sripathy were alerted and with the help of tamed elephants, they started the combing operation and the veterinarians darted the male tiger successfully. Later, it was released into the tiger core forest area

No clue about five tigers

However, there is no clue of the mother tiger and its four cubs that were sighted near Nanjadevanapura and the surrounding areas.

The tigers were sighted on December 19, near the farm at Tammanadahalli.

Later, they were sighted near a quarry, but disappeared before the combing operation was started.

The search operation has been intensified for the elusive tigers, the forest officials said.

Disruption in train services

UDUPI, DHNS: Passengers travelling to and from Mumbai will face temporary disruptions for about a month, as the Central Railway has altered the routes of two major long-distance services because of development works at the Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT).

The daily Thiruvananthapuram Central–Lokmanya Tilak (T) Netravati Express train (16346) will run only up to Panvel between Dec 31, 2025, and Jan 29, 2026. The Mangaluru Central–Lokmanya Tilak (T) Matsyagandha Express train (12620) will also terminate at Panvel. On the return journey, both the trains, No. 16345 (Jan 2 to 31), and No. 12619 will begin from Panvel.

Special New Year concert

BENGALURU, DHNS: Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira will present a vocal duet by Archana and Samanvi with B K Raghu on violin, G S Ramanujan on mridanga and V S Ramesh on morching at 5.30 pm on Thursday at 9th Main Road, Banashankari 2nd Stage.

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No: MESCOM/GM(A&HRD)/AGM(A)/2025-26/170 Dated : 31.12.2025

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Mangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited invites following short term tenders to avail manpower services of Station Nirvahakaru (Station Operators) and Station Assistant (Station Helpers) to 33/11 KV Sub Stations in MESCOM jurisdiction on outsource basis for Two years, which can be extendable for one more year based on the performance of the service provider and at the discretion of MESCOM.

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			Station Operators	Station Helpers
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MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0145 – LOT-1	Attavara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Mannagudda	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0145 – LOT-2	Attavara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kudroli	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0146 – LOT-1	Attavara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kadri	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0146 – LOT-2	Attavara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kankanady	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0147 – LOT-1	Attavara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Tokkottu	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0147 – LOT-2	Attavara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kotekar	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0148 – LOT-1	Attavara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn GIS-Urva	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0148 – LOT-2	Kavoor Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Panambur	4	4
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MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0149 – LOT-2	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Campco	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0150 – LOT-1	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kavu	4	4
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MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0151 – LOT-1	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kadaba	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0151 – LOT-2	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Nelyadi	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0152 – LOT-1	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Bellare	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0152 – LOT-2	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Sullia	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0153 – LOT-1	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Guttigaru	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0153 – LOT-2	Puttur Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Subrahmanya	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0154 – LOT-1	Bantwal Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Vagga	4	4
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MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0155 – LOT-1	Bantwal Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Dharmashtala	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0155 – LOT-2	Bantwal Dvn	33/11 KV Stn GIS- Kakkinje	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0156 – LOT-1	Bantwal Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Belthangady	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0156 – LOT-2	Bantwal Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Venooru	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0157 – LOT-1	Bantwal Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kalladka	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0157 – LOT-2	Bantwal Dvn	33/11 KV Stn GIS- Arbigudde Bantwala	4	4
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MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0158 – LOT-2	Udupi Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Malpe	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0159 – LOT-1	Kavoor Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Katipalla	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0159 – LOT-2	Udupi Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Shirva	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0160 – LOT-1	Udupi Dvn	33/11 KV Stn GIS-Udyavara	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0160 – LOT-2	Udupi Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Parkala	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0161 – LOT-1	Karkala Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Hebri	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0161 – LOT-2	Karkala Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Ajekaru	4	4
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MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0165 – LOT-2	Sagara Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Byakodu	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0166 – LOT-1	Chikmagalore Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kalasa	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0166 – LOT-2	Chikmagalore Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Banakal	4	4
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MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0167 – LOT-2	Koppa Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Koppa	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0168 – LOT-1	Koppa Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Jayapura	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0168 – LOT-2	Koppa Dvn	33/11 KV Stn N R Pura	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0169 – LOT-1	Koppa Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Kwadrahithlu	4	4
MESCOM/2025- 26/SE0169 – LOT-2	Koppa Dvn	33/11 KV Stn Shringeri	4	4

The interested eligible Bidders may log on to website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 07.01.2026.
Further bidders can take assistance with e-procurement Help desk.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

01. SMT. RATHNAMMA @ RATHNA, W/o Late K. V. Jayaraju, aged about 70 Years, and **02. SMT. UMA**, D/o Late K.V. Jayaraju, C/o Gopal Krishnam Raju, aged about 50 years, both are residing at No. S-008, 'PIONEER PARADISE', 24th Main Road, J.P. Nagar, 7th Phase, BENGALURU - 560 078, **03. SMT. D. USHA**, W/o K.N. Damodar Raju D/o Sri. K.V. Jayaraju, aged about 46 years, residing at #402, Sai Palace, 17th Main, BOB Colony, Behind Wood Rose Club, J.P. Nagar, 7th Phase, BENGALURU - 560 078 and **04. SMT. ASHA J.** W/o K. Neela Krishnam Raju D/o Sri. K.V. Jayaraju, aged about 42 years, residing at No.54/55, Flat No.003, Sri Sai Nilayam, 7th Main, Puttenahalli, J.P. Nagar, 7th Phase, BENGALURU - 560078, herein, being the absolute owners of the property mentioned in the Schedule hereunder, have offered to sell it. In turn, SRI. HOMBUJA JAIN MATH, Humcha Post, Humcha-577 436, Hosanagara Taluk, Shivamogga District, had agreed to purchase it for a valuable consideration.

If any person, Banks, Financial Institutions, Organizations, etc, having any claim/s, right, title and interest, whatsoever, over the schedule property, may lodge/ forward their objections with supporting documents of such claim to the undersigned, in writing **within 15 days** from the date of publication of this Notice

Failing which, it will be deemed that there is no such claim, by any body, right, title or interest and our client will purchase the property and proceed for completion of execution of SALE DEED and thereafter, no claim will be considered/entertained.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing No.21/1, Khata No.1/9, Bommanahalli CMC old Khata No.79/79, then No. 90/84/79 New No.536/21/1A now EPID No.8598236163 measuring East to West 105 feet and North to South 70 feet where boundaries are unequal and have bends and totally admeasuring 7350 sqft situated at No. 501077 Puttenahalli Gramathana, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, presently within the limits of BBMP Ward No.187-Puttenahalli, JP Nagar, Bengaluru and presently coming under the limits of Greater Bengaluru Authority and bounded on: **East by:** 30 Road, **West by:** Property bearing No. 42 belonging to Parashurama and property bearing No. 23, **North by :** Property No.367/334/311/20/9 (previous Khaneshumari No.85/5) belonging to Sri. Hombuja Jain Math, Humcha, **South by:** Road. On behalf of Sri. Hombuja Jain Mutt, Humcha, issued this notice on this the 30/12/2025 at Bengaluru.

JWALA KUMAR, Advocate
No. 39/1, Chamber 28, 2nd Floor, ASVNV Centenary Bhavana, Kempegowda Road, Bengaluru-560009. Mob-9886026693.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that My client, **Mr. NAGENDRA.K.A. S/o. Mr. K.N.Anantha Raju Gupta**, Residing at: No.440/21, 4th Main Road, Near K.R. Hospital, Nagendra Block, Banashankari 1st Stage, Benglauru – 560 050, he is interest to purchase the **Site Bearing No. 1153, Property No. 1153-8,** Situated at: 24th Main Road, 4th 'T' Block Jaya nagar Extension, Bengaluru-560 041, comes under jurisdiction of Old BBMP Ward. No.58, Jayanagar, vide PID No. 58-22-8, New BBMP Ward. No.168, Pattabhiramanagara, vide E-PID. No.6542017142. Bounded as: East by: Site No. 1166, West by : Road, North by: Site No. 1154, South by: Site No. 1152. Measuring: East to West: 27.43 Mtrs or 90 feet, North to South: 13.72 Mtrs or 45 feet, Totally measuring: 376.26 Sq.Mtrs., or 4050 Sq.ft., from its previous Owners **(1) Mr. N. R. Srivatsa, S/o. Late G.C. Ramaswamy,** Residing at: No. 299, Davidson Avenue, Ramsey, NJ, 07446, USA. Presently Residing at: No.1153, 4th 'T' Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru. and **(2) Mr. Arun Ramaswamy Srivatsa, S/o. Late G.C. Ramaswamy,** Residing at: No. 33251, Falcon Drive, Fremont, CA 94555, USA.

In this regard, if any person's has any objections or disputes regarding the above Site, can contact the below mentioned Advocate Office within 15 days from the date of Publication.

SOMASHEKHAR.N
Advocate
No.01, Sri Sai Skanda, 11th Cross, Janajyothinagar, Ullal Main Road, Bengaluru – 560056. Ph.No: 9448236908
Place: Bengaluru
Date: 31.12.2025

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PERSONAL

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Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Mohomed Sadiq, S/o Mohammed Ismail, DOB: 01-01-1977,** residing at No. 20/1, 2nd Cross, 2nd Main, Gowthamapura, Halasuru, HAL 2nd Stage, Bengaluru-560008, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED SADIQ** vide affidavit dated 31.12.2025 before notary N Kanchivaradharaju, Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called **MOHAMMED SADIQ** only

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Gayathri, Gayathri R & Gayathri Ramamurthy,** residing at No. 338, 7th B Main, 1st Block, HRBR Layout, Kalyannagar, Bengaluru-560043, declare that all the names pertain to me only & henceforth I shall be known as **GAYATHRI R** vide affidavit dated 30-12-2025, before notary Uday Kumar K, Bengaluru.

Lost

DOCUMENT LOST
I, **Rajagopal Boopathi** R/at No. 34, 17th Cross, 3rd Main, T.G. Layout, Ittamadu, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru-560085, have lost the **Original Absolute Sale Deed, Document / Identification No.: KEN-1-05312-2024-05, CD No. KEND74, Book-1, Registered 21-05-2004, Kengeri,** while in transit. If found please **Contact No: 8050623305, 944590226.**

Vodafone Idea...

Vodafone, From Page 1

According to sources, the government's action is aimed to ensure competition in the sector by keeping the company afloat. India's telecom sector is dominated by billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Jio and Sunil Bharti Mittal's Airtel.

Following the merger of Vodafone India and Idea Cellular in August 2018, Vodafone Idea had emerged as the country's largest telecom service provider in terms of subscribers and revenue. However, due to high debt and fund crunch, the company failed to cope with the competition, losing its subscribers, mostly to Jio and Airtel.

Vodafone Idea is estimated to have around 20 crore subscribers now, around one-fifth of them are inactive.

While sources confirmed that the relief measures have been approved by the Union Cabinet, Vodafone Idea said it has not yet received any communication from the government.

"As and when there is any development which requires disclosure, we will do the needful," Vodafone Idea said in its reply to a clarification notice issued by the stock exchanges.

Ministry moots removing cough syrups as OTC medicine

Announces ban on sale of Nimesulide painkiller

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Months after adulterated cough syrup deaths of children were reported from Madhya Pradesh, the Union Health Ministry has proposed removing cough syrups as an over-the-counter (OTC) medicine while announcing a ban on the production, marketing and sale of a high dose of oral Nimesulide, a common painkiller, because of safety concerns.

In a draft notification, the ministry has suggested amending the Drug Rules, 1945, to remove cough "syrups" as a class of medical products, exempted from sale-licensing rules that allow general stores to sell such products.

The list currently includes syrups, lozenges, pills and tablets for cough, along with other items like pain balm, antacid, cotton wool, bandage, gripe water for infants, skin ointment, burn ointment, tincture iodine, and Mercurochrome bottles not exceeding 100 ml.

Issued on Dec 29, the notification to modify Schedule K of the rules will be open for public comments for 30 days.

The move comes a few months after at least 20 children from Chhindwara district in Madhya Pradesh reportedly died after consuming cough syrups adulterated with toxic chemicals.

The Madhya Pradesh incident was not the first such tragedy, as multiple instances of spiked cough syrups killing children have been reported in India since 1972.

The World Health Organisation also issued a global alert in 2023 after adulterated cough syrups manufactured in India reportedly triggered children's deaths in other countries.

The move comes a few months after at least 20 children from Chhindwara district in Madhya Pradesh reportedly died after consuming cough syrups adulterated with toxic chemicals.

The ban on 100 mg of oral Nimesulide in immediate-release dosage came a year after the Indian Council of Medical Research recommended such a ban because of the medicine's safety concerns, which was accepted by the Drug Technical Advisory Board in April 2025.

"The Central government is satisfied that the use of all oral formulations containing Nimesulide above 100 mg in immediate release dosage form is likely to involve risk to human beings and that safer alternatives to the said drug are available," the notification issued on Monday said.

Health Ministry sources said only oral formulations above 100 mg in immediate-release form are banned. Strengths below 100 mg or strengths above 100 mg in other types of release (like sustained release and extended release) are not under this ban. Also, non-oral formulations like topical gels/creams or suppositories are not banned.

Safety concerns on Nimesulide have emerged over its adverse effects, particularly liver toxicity, leading to regulatory scrutiny and action in various countries.

The European Medicines Agency restricted the drug's use in 2002 to adults only, and since then, many countries have imposed bans or strict usage guidelines for both human and veterinary applications.

In India, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation banned the use of Nimesulide in children below 12 years in 2011 following reports of severe liver damage. Also, it is banned in all veterinary products since the medicine turned out to be a killer one for vultures.

Recent concerns have been raised regarding its continued use in adult populations, especially in high-risk groups, prompting a review by the DTAB.

After the review, the ICMR recommended that all formulations of Nimesulide above 100 mg should be banned, and CDSCO should ask the manufacturers to place a black box warning on the Nimesulide labels for all medicines that contain the drug either as a single ingredient or in combination. Also, it must not be prescribed to patients below 18 years and above 60 years of age.

Govt in a bind over 'illegal' lease order

Lease, From Page 1

As a result of the legal development, no organisation could take possession of the land, which is situated about 1 km from the Nice Road Junction and is lucrative in the fast growing realty market.

The high court, during a hearing in the matter in September 2019, noted the state government (the BJP was in power by then) had admitted in a written affidavit that the land in survey number 81 in Machohalli village "remains as a forest" and another "46 acres and 31 gunta" have been encroached. The court questioned the government's silence on the December 2017 order granting lease. Ever since, the state has maintained a measured silence on the matter despite repeated prompts by the high court.

The matter has been taken up at least twice by the Cabinet but deferred each time, including once last month. The government seeks to avoid the embarrassment of withdrawing the order, which was seen as an appeasement offer to various communities.

To a question, Forest Minister Eshwar B Khandre said he has placed all the relevant materials before the Cabinet. "The department has made its stand clear that the area is a forest. All documents have been placed before the Cabinet. I can't comment further," he said.

Karnataka State Backward Caste Federation, Kuruba Association, Sri Kaginele Maha Samsthana Kanakaguru Peetha of Haveri, Veerashaiva Mahasabha, Vokkaliga, Arya Ediga Association, Uppara, Dalit associations were among those who were granted 2.5 acres each or above. The other organisations, also caste associated, were granted anywhere between 1 to 2 acres each. While 58.5 acres were sanctioned to such organisations, 19.5 acres were allotted for public purposes.

Interestingly, more than a year before the government issued the lease order, the additional chief secretary of the Forest Department had written to his revenue department counterpart. This letter, written in October 2016, pointed out that the special deputy commissioner, Bengaluru had in 2009 rejected a claim of a charitable trust that 97 acres of Machohalli plantation, including the 78 acres coming under the 2017 lease order, had been released for constructing an orphanage. "The plantation has been declared a revenue land. However, it should be noted that it was never denotified and even now enjoys the status of forest," the letter said.

A retired forest officer described the area as the lung space of west Bengaluru. "The lease order is illegal for two reasons. First, the forest was never denotified. Secondly, it violates the Supreme Court orders in the Godavarman case as well as recent orders. The government should think twice before taking legal routes to denotify this land. There is no other green zone in the area where even the smallest pieces of farm lands are turning into paved layouts. The government will compromise the long-term sustainability of the city by giving this lung space," he said.

Interestingly, the 36 organisations who were granted the lease, sought to build cultural and educational institutions and hostels for children. The government organisations that received the lease had proposed a college, temple and other facilities, essentially turning the entire green patch into a build-up area.

A realtor who has developed a layout further ahead on the road said that while farm lands situated about 10 km away are sold at Rs 5 to 15 crore per acre, the Machohalli forest would become a prime property as it abuts the Magadi Road. "One quotes anywhere between Rs 8,000 to Rs 13,000 per square feet for residential sites in the areas," he said. The conservative value puts the cost of the land at well over Rs 2,500 crore.

Major shuffle in Karnataka IPS cadre; Bengaluru to get new DCPs

Boralingaiah, Hilori elevated to IGP rank; 23 cops promoted as DIG

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a significant administrative overhaul, the state government on Wednesday issued orders transferring and promoting several high-ranking Indian Police Service (IPS) officers across the state. The reshuffle, cleared by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, sees a major change of guard in Bengaluru City's divisional leadership and several district wings.

Two senior officers were promoted to the rank of Inspector General of Police (IGP) while being retained in their current territorial responsibilities. M B Boralingaiah will continue as IGP, Southern Range, Mysuru, and Ajai Hilori continues as Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime), Bengaluru City.

The government has promoted 23 officers to the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP). Among the key postings, Bhimashankar Guled has been moved to CID Economic Offences, C K Baba to KSRP, and S Girish to the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF). Several officers previously serving as DCPs in Bengaluru City, including D Devaraju (Training), S Girish (ANTF), and K Parashurama (CTRS), have been elevated to DIGP roles.

Additionally Abdul Ahad continuing as Director of BMTC, Sanjeev M Patil as DIGP General, and Kala Krishnaswamy as DIGP Crime in upgraded positions.

The promotions also extend to specialised wings, with Ilakkiya Karunagaran taking over DIGP Wireless, Vedamurthy and K Dharani Devi moving into Intelligence, and Siri Gowri joining the Karnataka Lokayukta. Other significant DIGP appointments include K M Shantharaju (ISD), Hanumantharaya (SHRC), S Savitha (Home Guards), M Puttamadaiah (Principal PTC Kalburgi), T Sreedhara (Hq), A N Prakash Gowda (SAF), Jinendra Khanagavi (Prisons), J K Rashmi (Railways), T P Shivakumar (SCRB), Vishnuvardhana (Director KPA), and H D Anand Kumar (Cyber Command).

Major shuffle in B'luru

Bengaluru will see new faces in key jurisdictional roles. Saidulu Adavath, previously with the CID, has been posted as the DCP Whitefield Division, taking over from K Parashurama who has been elevated to DIGP. Similarly, Yatish N moves from his role as SP Railways to take charge as DCP West Division. Mithun Kumar will take charge as DCP North-East Division. Vikram Amte has been posted as DCP East Division. Mohammed Sujitha M S moves into the DCP South-East Division.

Dists get new SPs

Chandrakant M V will take charge as Bengaluru Rural SP. K Ramarajan (Belagavi), B Nikhil (Shivamogga), Arunangshu Giri (Raichur), Jitendra Kumar (Chikkamagaluru), Kannika Sukhriwal (Kolar), Bindu Mani (Kodagu), Shobharani (Mandya), Sara Fathima (Railways- SP), Muthuraju (Chamarajanagar), Sajeeth (ISD), Pavan Nejjur (Ballari), Shubhanwita (Hassan) and Mallikarjuna Baladandi (Mysuru).

4 new SPs for CID

Three junior officers Harsha Priyamvada, Shaloo and Sam Varghese have been promoted from the rank of ASP to SP CID while Kavitha B T has been transferred from Chamarajanagar as SP CID.

PUBLIC NOTICE / CAUTION NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that the rights in property bearing All that piece and parcel of the Property, bearing House **List No. 3/2, V.P Katha No. 322, Bearing House List No. 3/2, Khatha No. 55, Assessment No. 322, bearing House List No. 1, Katha No. 3/2, bearing No. 3/2, B.B.M.P. Katha No. 322/B, bearing No. 3/2, and the B.B.M.P. Katha No. 3/2/322C bearing Old Katha No. 3/2 V.P. Katha No. 55/322, Katha No. 3/2, V.P. Katha No. 322A, presently within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur hobli, Bangalore South Taluk,** totally **measuring 33424 Sq.feet along with 60,000 Square feet** building is subject matter of suit bearing **O.S. NO.5845/2015** pending before the **HON'BLE CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE CCH5, IX ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE** and **the Hon'ble Court vide interim order dated: 04-07-2015 and 05-02-2024 has by way of temporary injunction directed N. Shivaprasad and Uma Prasad the Defendant No.1 and 2 not to alienate and not to, create any charge/encumbrances or third party rights on the Suit Schedule A & B properties as mentioned below:**

Any person/s dealing with any part of the property mentioned below are hereby cautioned not to enter into any transaction of sale agreement, sale or deal with or purchase, sale, charge, encumbrance, lease hold rights etc in any manner whatsoever. Any person who enters into such transactions shall do so at his/her own risk, cost and consequences, and our client **Karnataka Kaveri Education and Cultural Society (R)** represented by **President i.e. Smt. R. K. Saraswathi and Secretary i.e Sri. Dr. H. V. Krishnaswamy** will not be responsible in any manner and that the said transactions are nullity and void ab initio being made in violation of the court order and will also be held liable for contempt of court.

SCHEDULE 'A' AND 'B' PROPERTIES IN O.S. NO.5845/2015. HON'BLE CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS - JUDGE CCH.5, IX ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE WHEREIN ORDER OF TEMPORARY INJUNCTION IS GRANTED:

SCHEDULE 'A' PROPERTIES
ITEM NO.1

All the piece and parcel of property bearing converted land in **Sy. 3/2, measuring 0.16 ½ Guntas out of 0.20 ½ Guntas,** situated at **Ambalipura village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, converted vide order no. BDS ALN SR (SA) 47/95-96 dated 27.02.1996** passed by the **Office of the Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore** and bounded on:

East by : B.P Papanna Reddy's property,
West by : Remaining portion of KKECS property and Sri. Pilla Reddy property
North by : Sri. B.P. Papanna Reddy's property,
South by : Remaining property of Sy. No. 3/2.

ITEM NO.2

All that piece and parcel of property House List **No. 3/2, V.P. Katha No. 322, presently within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk,** measuring **East to West 60 feet** and **North to South 80 feet, totally 4800 Sq. Feet** and bounded on:

East by : 20 Feet Road,
West by : Pilla Reddy's property,
North by : Radhamma's property
South by : Radhamma's property,

ITEM NO.3

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing **House List No. 3/2, Katha No. 55, Assessment No. 322, presently within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 117 feet and North to South 23 feet,** and bounded on:

East by : Hanuma Reddy's property,
West by : Pilla Reddy's property,
North by : R.K. Saraswathy's property
South by : Smt. Radhamma's remaining property,

ITEM NO.4

All that piece and parcel of property bearing **House List No.1, Katha No. 3/2,** presently within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, **situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk,** measuring **East to West 40 feet** and **North to South 40 feet,** and bounded on:

East by : Papanna Reddy's property,
West by : Road,
North by : B.N. Radhamma's property,
South by : B.N. Radhamma's property,

ITEM NO. 5

All that piece and parcel of property bearing **House List No.3/2, BBMP katha No. 322/B situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 50 feet and North to South 52 feet,** and bounded on the:

East by : Sri. P.B. Papanna Reddy's property,
West by : Road and KKECS property.
North by : KKECS property,
South by : KKECS property,

ITEM NO. 6

All that piece and parcel of property bearing **House List No. 3/2, and the B.B.M.P. Katha No.3/2/322/C, situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 60 feet and North to South: 10 feet,** and bounded on the:

East by : Road and KKECS Society property.
West by : Pilla Reddy's property,
North by : Property belongs to KKECS
South by : Smt. B.N. Radhamma's remaining property,

ITEM NO.7

All that piece and parcel of property bearing **Old Khatha No. 3/2, V.P. Katha No. 55/322, presently within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 117.6 feet and North to South 139 feet, totally 16333 Sq. Feet** and bounded on the:

East by : B.P. Papanna Reddy's property,
West by : Pilla Reddy's property,
North by : Property belongs to the Vendor,
South by : Property belongs to the Vendor,

ITEM NO.8

All that piece and parcel of property bearing **Old Khatha No. 3/2, V.P. Katha No. 322A, presently within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 60 feet and North to South 80 feet, totally 4800 Sq. Feet** and bounded on the:

East by : Hanuma Reddy's property,
West by : Pilla Reddy's property,
North by : Prithviraj's property,
South by : Vendor's Remaining property.

Consolidated Schedule Property of Item No. 1 to 8 on Actual / Physical Measurements

All that piece and parcel of the Property, bearing **House List No. 3/2, V.P. Katha No. 322, Bearing House List No. 3/2, Khatha No. 55, Assessment No. 322, bearing House List No. 1, Katha No. 3/2, bearing No. 3/2, B.B.M.P. Katha No. 322/B, bearing No. 3/2, and the B.B.M.P. Katha No. 3/2/322C bearing Old Katha No. 3/2 V.P. Katha No. 55/322, Katha No. 3/2, V.P. Katha No. 322A, presently within the limits of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, totally measuring 51,405 Sq.feet** along with **60,000 Square feet building, Mosaics Flooring,** and bounded on the:

East by : Papanna Reddy's property,
West by : Property belong to Mukund and Nagraj D.P.,
North by : Vendor's Remaining property
South by : 30 feet road and B. N Radhamma's property.

SCHEDULE 'B' PROPERTIES
ITEM NO. A

All that piece and parcel of property bearing converted **Land in Sy. No. 3/2, measuring 2540 Sq.Feet, situated at Ambalipura Village, Varthur Hobli Bangalore South Taluk,** converted vide **Order No. BDS ALN SR (SA)47/95-96, Dated 27.02.1996,** passed by the office of the **Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore** and bounded on:

East by : Property now belongs Mr. Shiva Prasad and Mrs. Uma Prasad,
West by : KKECS property and 20 feet road.
North by : Sri. B.P. Papanna Reddy's property
South by : KKECS property and Private property

ITEM NO.B

All that piece and parcel of property and property bearing **No. 322A, Katha No. 54, Assessment No. 3/2, totally measuring 9000 sq. Feet,** situated at **Ambalipura village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk,** and bounded on

East by : Property belongs to Muslims,
West by : 14 Sites belonging to Sri. Ravi, Rukmini, Nanjappa Reddy, Saroja, Gopi, Muninarasappa KKECS (2 Sites) & Nataraj,
North by : Ibbalur Gadi
South by : Sarjapura Main Road.

Place: Bangalore **Date: 31-12-2025**

SHAHNAWAZ MATEEN MAMADAPUR
ADVOCATE, ASM LAW PARTNERS, Advocates & Solicitors
94/1-2, Infantry Road, Behind Karnataka Bank, Bangalore- 560001
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Course Duration-5 Days
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JHARKHAND URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED
(Govt. of Jharkhand Undertaking)
JUIDCO Bhawan, Kutchery Road, Ranchi-834001, Jharkhand.
Ph No.: +91-651-2225878,
CIN: U45200JH2013SGC001752, e-mail Id-juidcolimited@gmail.com
NIT No.: JUIDCO/NIT/H to B/Road/RNC/683 Date- 31.12.2025
e-Procurement (Short Tender Notice)

1	Name of Work	Resurfacing/ Refurbishing work of Road from Hinoo Chowk to Birsa Chowk in Ranchi Jharkhand.
2	Mode of Bid Submission	e-tendering (http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in)
3	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Rs. 6,94,39,040.00/- (Rupees Six Crore Ninety-Four Lakhs, Thirty-Nine Thousand, Fourty) only.
4	Time of Completion	06 Months
5	Tender Fee and Bid Security to be submitted online	Tender document fee: Rs 25,000/- (Rupees Twenty-Five Thousand) only. **Non-Refundable.** Bid Security: Rs 6,95,000.00/- (Rupees Eight Lakhs Thirty-Seven Thousand) only
6	Date/Time of Publication of Tender on Website	01.01.2026 at 15:00 Hrs.
7	Last Date/Time of Bid Submission	08.01.2026 at 17:00 Hrs.
8	Date/Time of opening of Bid	09.01.2026 at 17:00 Hrs.
9	Bid Submission Address	Jharkhand Urban Infrastructure Development Company Limited, JUIDCO Bhawan, Kutchery Chowk, Ranchi, Jharkhand- 834001
10	Helpline Number of e-procurement Cell	0651-2225878

Further details can be seen on website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in
Sd/-
Project Director (Technical)
PR 369805 Urban Development(25-26)#D **JUIDCO Ltd, Ranchi**

JHARKHAND URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Jharkhand Undertaking)
JUIDCO Bhawan, Kutchery Chowk, Ranchi – 834001, Jharkhand
Phone: +91 651 2225878 | Email: juidcolimited@gmail.com
Name of Work: Resurfacing / Refurbishing work of Road from Airport to Hinoo Chowk in Ranchi, Jharkhand
NIT No.: JUIDCO/NIT/A to H/Road/RNC/672
Tender ID: 2025_UDD_105976_1
PR No.: 364298
TENDER CANCELLATION NOTICE
It is hereby informed that the minimum required number of technically responsive bids could not be received against the above-mentioned tender. Accordingly, the present call of tender is hereby cancelled.
The bidders are requested to await further communication, if any, regarding the tender for the said work.
Sd/-
Project Director (Technical)
PR 369796 Urban Development (25-26)_D **JUIDCO Ltd.**

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of Corrigendum to Tender notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/162/2025 dated 24.11.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Sl.No.	Item of Work	Approx.Value
1.	Request for Proposal (RFP) for appointment of Authority Engineer for providing project management services for (1) Tumkur-Chitradurga-Davanagere New Line Project - Construction of New Broad Gauge Line between Chainage 66/400 & Chainage 90/000 (23.60 Km) including Civil, Signal & Telecommunication, Electrification and General Electrical works between Tavarkere (Excl) & Hiriyur (Excl) stations on Engineering Procurement & Construction (EPC) mode. (2) Tumkur-Chitradurga Davanagere New Line Project Construction of New Railway Line between Chainage 90/000 and Chainage 130/375 (40.375 km) Civil, Signal & Telecommunication, Electrification and General Electrical works between Hiriyur (Incl.) & Palavvanahalli (Incl) stations on Engineering Procurement & Construction (EPC) mode. **(Tender Ref. No. PMS-TK-DVG-03)**	Rs. 14,41,74,192/-

Date of Closing	
Existing	**Modified**
08.01.2026 (15.00 Hrs.)	20.01.2026 (15.00 Hrs.)

For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/Works, Bengaluru Cantonment
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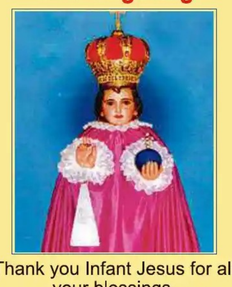
Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving

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- Agnes Hans & Sunil Christopher Hans

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Shared hope in a disrupted world

Slaves to the calendar that humans are, the new year provides us with a past and projects a future. Years are markers of human experience, and the world is, ultimately, human experience in time. The experience of the past lives in us with pleasures and sorrows, triumphs and disappointments. We are inclined, and even genetically trained, to hope for a better future. The celebrations on the last night of the year signify this hope, on which mankind has survived and evolved. It could only be the most primitive form of hope that throbbed in the amoeba in the ocean; the hope that runs through our cells, driving us to the stars we have trained our minds on.

When we move into the new year, we turn a page, as the cliché goes. The new page belongs to us as individuals and as members of the community, society, nation, and the world where we belong. It is difficult to disentangle the lives we live at all these levels. The idea that we are others, too, and that we live our lives at other levels, sharing them with wider congregations, gives our new year greater gravity and relevance. This is why New Year's is a collective celebration, moving across the globe from east to west, sweeping everybody's past away and ushering in a common future. So when the clear, young morning emerges from the blur and noise of the night, it is everybody's day and year.

A new year is a collective restart; an expression of hope that endures despite crises and uncertainties

That is the ideal new year, but we live in the real world, broken into 8 billion minds, claimed by 200 governments, riven by wars, divided by ideologies and religions, and threatened with extinction by the shifting climate. In the new year, there are millions of new years, each with its happiness, sadness, memories, and forgetting. We live in a world hit by hate and torn by strife, and are subjected to regular, intensive revisions of identities. The new dawn is clouded by confusion, disruption, and uncertainties. But it has always been so. The words the first man is supposed to have spoken to the first woman are that they lived in an age of crisis. The sense of crisis has always hung over our lives across ages, but the rainbow of hope has also brightened them up and spurred us on. Every day is a day of crisis and of hope, but hope takes us through. It does so this year too.

Lifelines cannot afford downtime

A quarter of Karnataka's 108 ambulance fleet being off the road is not a routine administrative hiccup; it is a public health red flag. Of the 715 ambulances under the Arogya Kavacha programme, only about 530 are currently available. In a service where response time often determines survival, this shortfall is not an abstract statistic but an ordeal for patients and families waiting in desperation. The 108 system is designed around a 20-minute response benchmark, achieved by positioning ambulances at strategic locations. When nearly 25% of the fleet is under maintenance, the logistics network collapses. Vehicles have to be dispatched from farther away, response times stretch, and the "golden hour" for trauma, cardiac events, or obstetric emergencies is squandered. The impact is particularly severe in rural taluks, where the absence of even one ambulance can leave an entire population exposed.

Principal Secretary (Health) Harsh Gupta's defence that the shortage causes problems largely in the morning offers little reassurance. Emergencies do not follow office hours or optimisation charts. A senior emergency care doctor's blunt counterpoint is worth heeding: there is no such thing as a convenient hour for a medical emergency. Any interruption in the fleet, at any time, risks lives. For millions, the 108 ambulance is more than an emergency vehicle; it is the poor man's taxi to the hospital. Expectant mothers form the largest user group, followed by accident victims, cardiac patients, and rural families with no access to private transport. That the service has evolved into a universal lifeline is a testament to its success, but it also means that any disruption disproportionately hurts those with the fewest alternatives.

Gaps in the 108 ambulance service threaten to hit emergency care, especially for the poor and vulnerable

The current strain is unfolding amid the state's transition from a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model to full government management by February 2026. The government claims this will ensure greater transparency, better technological monitoring, financial savings, and labour stability. Trials of new software and integrated emergency platforms are encouraging. Yet the pitfalls are equally clear. Transitions are messy, and bureaucratic delays in maintenance, hiring, or repairs can paralyse a service that cannot afford downtime. There is no disputing that 108 has served Karnataka well for nearly two decades. It is precisely for that reason that the transition must be handled with exceptional care. Clearing the maintenance backlog, prioritising repairs, and ensuring uninterrupted operations are not optional administrative tasks; they are matters of life and death. Reform should strengthen a lifeline, not weaken it. In emergency care, even one missing ambulance can mean one life too many.

SURVIVING TURBULENCE

India's growth rides on incremental reform

The cumulative effect of reforms is showing, but institutional gaps and poor private investment remain challenges

G N BAJPAI

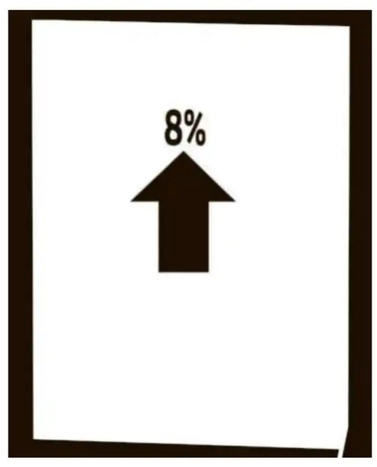
India heads into the new year continuing to be the fastest-growing large economy in a world marked by challenges. The latest World Economic Outlook of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicated a continued slowdown in global economic growth, with risks remaining tilted to the downside. This came amid disruptions brought by US tariffs, which also brought 25% extra tariffs on Indian goods, making it a total of 50% on goods exported by India to the US. On November 28, the National Statistical Office (NSO) announced 8.2% GDP growth for Q2 of FY 25-26. The growth in the face of a global slowdown, the punishing Trump tariffs, and the 7.8% GDP growth of Q1 FY 26, is noteworthy. There have been contributions by all three sectors: primary (agriculture at 3.5%); secondary (industry at 7.7% and manufacturing at 9.1%); and tertiary (services at 9.2%), indicating that the core of the economy is robust.

Sceptics about these numbers and the upgrade in the GDP growth rate are not far to find. Recently, the IMF rated India's GDP data quality a low 'C'. "Economic change in all periods depends more than most economists think on what people believe," wrote Joel Mokyr, the 2025 Nobel Laureate in Economics, in the opening of his 2010 book, *The Enlightened Economy: An Economic History of Britain 1700-1850*. We may ask: what do people believe in the case of India's growth story?

With the post-pandemic revival of the economy, the GDP growth of India has been exceeding expectations year after year. The 9.2% growth in FY 2024 was dismissed as a statistical mirage driven by very low deflators, and it was predicted that growth would come down the following year. In FY 2025, India delivered a GDP growth of 6.5%, taking the average two-year growth to 7.85%, far beyond the deflator washout hypothesis.

India's long-term GDP growth since 2000 has been 6.5%. Seemingly, its potential growth has moved up to over 7%. What is adding to this is an array of reforms and affirmative actions taken by the Union government in the last decade. Macro-economic reforms include the consolidation of the fragmented indirect tax regime into GST and its rationalisation this year, legislative creation of the Exit Policy-Bankruptcy Code (IBC), Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA), and Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). India has transitioned from the fragile five in 2013 to a micro-economically stable geography represented by low inflation, low fiscal deficit, a contained debt-to-GDP ratio, an endurable current account deficit, and high forex reserves.

The RBI's State of the Economy paper, published in December, noted, "Continued focus on macro-economic



fundamentals and economic reforms should help unlock efficiencies and productive gains to firmly keep the economy on a high growth trajectory amidst a fast-changing global environment". These reforms have been supplemented by the cleanup of balance sheets of banks and corporates, creation of a national digital public infrastructure, a major shift in public expenditure towards capital formation-infrastructure build-up and a steady decline of fiscal deficit.

Schemes such as Lakhpati Didis, Mudra Loans, and support to Farmers' Producers Organisations launched in the last decade are playing out now. The National Agriculture Market, e-NAM, that networks existing Agriculture Produce Market Committees and individual farmers, has been put on a robust frame. Such affirmative actions have provided financial support and led to job creation, skill enhancement, capacity building, and market linkages, bringing financial and social inclusion to the lowest strata of society, especially in rural areas and those engaged in agriculture.

A new governance direction

Confidence amongst professionals and institutions in public policies is validated in part by the growing number of Global Capacity Centres (GCCs). Nearly 1,800 GCCs, employing over 19 lakh people, generated a revenue of $64.6 billion by 2024. Steps such as self-attestation, self-assessment, decriminalisation of offences/lapses, push for refund of public money by banks, insurance companies and mutual funds, and tax authorities, etc., seem to indicate the direction of governance is moving, albeit slowly, from policing to an administrative state. Implementation of the recently announced labour reforms and the Gauba Committee recommendations focusing on easing the burden for Macro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and legislation on the securities market and nuclear power will likely aid growth.

These steps are leading to growing economic engagement, improving infrastructure, declining logistics cost, reducing financial repression, and rising incremental capital output ratio (INCOR). Whereas the measures may not look like the 1991 Big Bang reforms, these incremental steps seem to be favourably influencing India's GDP growth.

However, lifting the potential GDP growth to over 8%, the minimum required rate for achieving a developed economy status by 2047, warrants institutional reforms that cover the judiciary, public administration, and police, among others, in addition to land reforms, electricity reforms, etc. These are essential for a reduction in time and cost of enforcing contracts, land acquisition, ease in the delivery of public services, and raising total factor productivity. It is important to note that currently, only one of the investment engines is firing at full throttle – the public sector. Public investments have budgetary limitations. Private sector investments continue to be sluggish. The government must engage with trade and industry bodies to understand why this is so and take appropriate measures to spur private sector investment. This is India's moment to capitalise on its demography and build a prosperous nation.

(The writer is a former chairman of SEBI and former chairman of LIC; Syndicate: The Billion Press)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

January 1 and a toxic love triangle

Why self-control is harder than resisting a piping-hot *jalebi* at 9pm?

JAHNAVI GURJER

Every January 1, I wake up feeling reborn. Not spiritually. That would require a moral upgrade, but behaviourally. This, I declare, is the year I break up with sweets, fried food, and impulsive online shopping. I make this proclamation with the gravity of a national oath: loud, sincere, and largely unattainable.

By midnight, I expect temptation to have taken the hint and quietly exited my life. It hasn't.

I treat January 1 like a psychological factory reset. If the calendar can turn over, surely my willpower can auto-refresh. I expect self-control to arrive pre-installed, like a mandatory software update. But by January 5, negotiations begin in earnest: one sweet doesn't count; fried food is fine if "air-fried"; and online shopping is harmless if "for productivity".

By January 20, I'm once again in a fully committed relationship with sugar, oil, and delivery tracking. What amazes me is my sincerity. Every December 31, I genuinely believe I am done. I look at *laddoos* with disdain, mute Swiggy notifications, and even uninstall shopping apps to assert dominance over capitalism only to reinstall them a week later "just to browse".

My conviction is touching, built entirely on hope and denial. The real problem is not craving; it is choreography. I want transformation to happen automatically while I observe passively from the couch. Sugar isn't concerned about symbolism. Oil doesn't fear New Year's speeches. And e-commerce, especially at 11:47 pm, has never respected self-control.

January is especially cruel. It is cold, humourless, and filled with people pretending diet food is enjoyable. Every gym looks like a refugee camp of repentance. Social media is flooded with smoothie bowls that taste like regret. And the same apps that ruined my November now offer "New Year Detox Deals".

I am not cultivating discipline; I am fighting a three-front war against dopamine. Then comes perfection paralysis. No sweets. No fried food. No impulsive shopping. These are not resolutions; they are ultimatums. And though the first failure feels fatal, one *gulab jamun* at a cousin's wedding, and suddenly the moral floodgates open. "What's one more?" I reason while ordering another box and, out of nowhere, clicking "Place Order" on e-commerce apps for running shoes as compensation.

It is a magnificent cycle of sin and self-justification: sugar for regret and retail for redemption. Eventually, I have learnt that January 1 is not a reset button. It is a mirror showing me how much I crave transformation without inconvenience. Still, I will press the imaginary button again, because illusions die hard, and cashback dies harder. And patience, unlike smartphones, never goes on sale.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Why judicial restraint matters to rights, ecology

This refers to 'Supreme Court's reset reclaims justice' (Dec 31). The Court's recent interventions in the Aravalli and Unnao cases underline the judiciary's role as a constitutional brake when executive action drifts into overreach. By clarifying the meaning of "hills" and staying further construction, the Court chose environmental prudence over administrative haste. Such course correction is timely, especially when ambiguous definitions are used to dilute safeguards. Development that erodes ecology ultimately undermines public interest, and judicial insistence on precision restores balance to policy-making driven by expediency. Equally significant is the Court's decision to grant bail to a man convicted under an overextended reading of "public servant". Correcting interpretative excesses prevents criminal law from becoming a blunt instrument. Together, these rulings reaffirm that justice lies not in mechanical application of statutes but in reasoned interpretation. In times of hurried governance, judicial clarity remains essential to preserve rights, accountability, and institutional credibility.

K Chidanand Kumar, Bengaluru

Cruelty unlimited

Apropos 'Caretakers starve man to death, disabled daughter rescued in critical state' (Dec 31), it is distressing to read how a caretaker couple, driven by greed for property, stooped so low as to hold a retired Railways employee and his intellectually disabled daughter captive for three long years without proper food, resulting in the man's death and leaving the woman severely emaciated. This is the height of cruelty. The State must step up efforts to ensure safety and care for the vulnerable.

M Basavaraj, Davanagere

Power tussle intensifies

This refers to 'CM tussle: Cong must decide before Feb, says Parameshwara' (Dec 31). Leaders of both rival camps have been defying the directive from Congress General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, in charge of Karnataka, to refrain from airing their views in public on the leadership change in the state. Now, Home Minister G Parameshwara, who is also eyeing the CM's post, has breached the code and served an ultimatum to the High Command to settle the issue by February. The Siddu-DKS tussle for the CM's post flared up after the Congress government completed half its term, as theories emerged that there had been an unwritten agreement that DKS would take over as CM for the remaining tenure. Now G Parameshwara has jumped in. He is a Dalit leader with a number of supporters among sitting MLAs, and the party cannot afford to treat him lightly.

C V Aravind, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Rahul Gandhi is doing the work of Bhagwan Shree Ram, which was to ensure justice for harassed, and deprived; Rahul Gandhi is doing the same. He likes to do this service in place of doing photo sessions at the Ram Temple... Rajiv *ji* was behind the opening of the lock there...

Nana Patole,
Maharashtra Congress leader

Flattery labours under the odious charge of servility.

Tacitus

TO BE PRECISE

MAY INDIANS CATCH UP WITH THIS NEWS THIS YEAR!
DH
India surpasses Japan to become world's 4th largest economy
2026
SAKTHI KUMAR

IN PERSPECTIVE

A green reset to textile industry

In a sustainability-driven global market, India must prioritise environmental compliance

NAVYA DANG AND SUDAKSHINA SINHA BANERJEE

India is the world's sixth-largest exporter of textiles and apparel, with the sector contributing 8.21% of total exports in FY 2024. The United States and the European Union remain India's most important markets. With a 3.9% share in global textile and apparel trade and a sustained trade surplus, textiles remain a cornerstone of India's export economy.

However, the basis of global competitiveness is changing. The EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and increasing buyer demands from the US for labour transparency, environmental compliance, and supply-chain traceability indicate a structural shift in trade norms. Sustainability is no longer discretionary; it is becoming a market access condition.

India's textile sector has historically been anchored in natural fibres such as cotton, silk, jute, and wool. As the largest cotton producer globally, India benefits from abundant raw material availability and strong domestic and export demand. India also produces emerging sustainable fibres, including hemp, banana fibre, bamboo viscose, linen, ramie, and indigenous silks. While these materials have growing global appeal, their contribution to industrial-scale production remains marginal. The presence of sustainable inputs has not yet translated into systemic transformation.

Worldwide, countries are aligning with global sustainability norms. Asian countries continue to dominate global textile manufacturing, with China accounting for nearly half of production. However, several Asian exporters are rapidly aligning with international governance standards.

Vietnam, now the second-largest textile and apparel exporter after China, has institutionalised sustainability through widespread adoption of certifications such as GOTS, OEKO-TEX, and WRAP, driven by buyer requirements rather than regulatory compulsion.

Concurrently, the global textile industry is transitioning from a linear production model to a circular economy, aimed at reducing waste and emissions. Recycling and upcycling initiatives – particularly in Europe – demonstrate growing industrial commitment, even as commercial viability challenges persist.

India has initiated institutional responses through the formation of an ESG Task Force for the textile sector. Efforts such as Texprocil's promotion of Kasturi Cotton represent early attempts to build traceability and credibility in export markets.

The most significant policy intervention is the MITRA (Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel) Parks, developed under the government's 5F Policy. These parks aim to integrate the textile value chain within shared, resource-efficient infrastructure and lower compliance costs for MSMEs. Seven states have been selected to host these parks, with provisions for worker housing, skill development, and formal employment.

For a sector characterised by fragmentation and limited ESG capacity, this model has the potential to standardise compliance and improve export competitiveness.

Notwithstanding its potential, the MITRA framework carries risks that require proactive mitigation. Land acquisition may result in farmer displacement and social inequities, while increased industrial activity could exacerbate local water stress. Weak governance of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) poses environmental risks, and smaller local suppliers may face exclusion if integration mechanisms are not carefully designed.

Without strong safeguards, sustainability gains at the macro level may be offset by localised social and environmental costs.

Despite policy intent, material transformation remains limited. According to Fashion for Good, low-impact natural fibres such as hemp and jute have not yet achieved industrial scalability in India. IBEF reports that only 1% of fibres in Indian textiles come from recycled clothing.

New market sensibilities

Textiles and apparel remain among India's most employment-intensive export sectors. As global buyers increasingly mandate ESG compliance, sustainability is no longer a regulatory exercise, but a strategic determinant of market access. Competing exporters such as Bangladesh and Vietnam have already internalised this shift.

In India, environmental considerations continue to trail financial imperatives in industrial decision-making. This imbalance must be corrected if India is to retain credibility and competitiveness in global textile trade.

India must reposition ESG as an industrial policy, not a compliance overhead. This requires enforceable standards, credible third-party verification, shared ESG infrastructure for MSMEs, and transparent data on emissions, labour, and traceability. Without measurable and enforceable sustainability frameworks, India risks losing ground in markets that increasingly reward governance over volume.

The global textile transition is underway. India's response in this decade will determine whether it remains a price-driven supplier or emerges as a sustainability-aligned manufacturing leader.

(Navya is a socio-legal researcher; Sudakshina is an impact advisor)

Mumbai's civic polls drift from governance to identity binaries

DATELINE Mumbai

MRITYUNJAY BOSE

As Maharashtra heads into high-stakes civic elections, the spotlight is firmly on the Brihan Mumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), India's richest and most powerful urban local body that governs the country's financial capital.

Historically hailed as *Urbs Prima in Indis*—the first city of India—Mumbai's civic body, spread across the twin districts of Mumbai City and Mumbai Suburban, administers a metropolis of over 1.3 crore people with a budget larger than that of several Indian states—a whopping Rs 75,000 crore-plus. From roads, drains and public health to schools, hospitals and coastal infrastructure, the BMC shapes almost every aspect of the city's daily life.

After a prolonged period without elected corporators, the upcoming elections are being viewed as a referendum on urban governance, accountability and political control over the institution that runs one of Asia's most complex megacities. Yet, as nominations closed, the campaign narrative appears to be drifting away from civic issues towards a sharper political binary—Marathi pride versus Hindu identity.

At a time when Maharashtra politics is dominated by two rival alliances—the Maha Yuti and the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA)—the Mumbai civic contest has turned triangular, and in some pockets, even multi-cornered, making the outcome difficult to predict. In local body elections, margins are often razor-thin, adding to the uncertainty.

The last elected five-year term of the BMC, chosen in 2017, ended on March 7, 2022. For over three years, the civic body has functioned without a general body or an elected mayor. During this period, Maharashtra's political landscape underwent a dramatic transformation—from a largely bipolar contest between the BJP–Shiv Sena alliance and the Congress–NCP Democratic Front to two new and competing formations.

Today, the Maha Yuti (NDA) comprises the BJP, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the Ajit Pawar-led NCP. The MVA—part of the broader I.N.D.I.A. bloc—includes the Congress, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP). However, the BMC elections are not being fought strictly on these alliance lines, further complicating the contest.

For nearly a quarter century, the undivided Shiv Sena—first under the late Balasaheb Thackeray and later under his son Uddhav—ruled the BMC. The dominance ended after the party's political split, which also saw Uddhav Thackeray become chief minister under the MVA before his government was toppled.

The civic polls have gained added significance following the reunion of the Thackeray cousins—Uddhav and Raj—after their acrimonious split in 2005. The Shiv Sena (UBT) and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) have forged an alliance centred on Marathi *manoos* (people), *asmita* (pride) and *bhasha* (language).

Their principal challenge comes from the BJP and the Shinde-led Shiv Sena, supported by smaller allies such as the Ramdas Athawale-led Republican Party of India and Anandraj Ambedkar's Republican Sena.

For Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who calls the shots for the BJP, the brief is clear: secure the party's first-ever mayor in the BMC — a long-cherished but as yet unfulfilled ambition. In the past, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have repeatedly stressed the need for a "triple-engine government" in Mumbai to accelerate development.

The BJP–Shiv Sena combine has foregrounded Hindutva and Hindu identity, if statements by Mumbai BJP president Ameet Satam and his predecessor, State Cultural Affairs Minister Ashish Shelar, are any indication. Their assertion that the BJP will "not allow a Khan mayor in Mumbai", coupled with references to developments in Pakistan and Bangladesh, has sharpened the polarising pitch.

On the other hand, the Congress—after initially indicating it would go solo, citing reservations about Raj Thackeray's stand on migrants and minorities—abruptly stitched up an alliance with the Prakash Ambedkar-led Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA), despite having earlier branded it the BJP's "B-Team". The Congress is also backed by Mahadev Jankar's Rashtriya Samaj Paksha and RPI (Gavai).

Several parties are contesting independently, including the Aam Aadmi Party led by former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party, and Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM. The two NCP factions—NCP and NCP (SP)—are also fighting separately.

"The election is essentially between the Thackerays' Marathi pride and the BJP's Hindutva," said veteran political analyst Prakash Akolkar, who authored the first biographical book on the Shiv Sena. "The key question is how many Marathis vote as Hindus and how many Hindus vote as Marathis—therein lies the answer."

Akolkar noted that the BJP's election machinery is working overtime in Mumbai. "The Thackerays, while they came together on the Marathi issue in June–July 2025, they were the last to announce their alliance and seat-sharing. The delay has impacted cadre morale and may have cost the Shiv Sena (UBT) a chance to replicate its Lok Sabha performance in the city," he said.

The Thackerays have invoked their ideological lineage — from Prabodhankar Thackeray, the legendary social reformer and rationalist associated with the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement, to Balasaheb Thackeray and Shrikant Thackeray—all of whom opposed attempts to separate Mumbai from Maharashtra.

Veteran journalist and civil rights activist Jatin Desai lamented the absence of a substantive civic discourse. "Where are the manifestos? Who is talking about urban planning, public transport, roads and infrastructure? Commuting in Mumbai is becoming increasingly difficult," he said.

Earlier this year, the BMC presented a staggering Rs 75,427 crore budget for 2025–2026, with total reserves standing at Rs 81,744.42 crore. This exceeds the annual budgets of several states, including Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh.

Veteran journalist Ajit Joshi summed up the stakes succinctly: "It is difficult to predict which way the election will go. The sheer size of the BMC budget is what draws every major political party into this battle." **DHNS**

Just like past tech booms, the latest frenzy has produced a group of billionaires — at least on paper — from smaller start-ups

New billionaires of the AI boom

NATALLIE ROCHA

The artificial intelligence boom has turned high-profile billionaires such as Jensen Huang, the CEO of chipmaker Nvidia, and Sam Altman, the CEO of ChatGPT maker OpenAI, into even richer billionaires.

It has also produced a crop of new billionaires—at least on paper—from smaller startups. These individuals may become future Silicon Valley power brokers like the wealthy executives created by past tech booms, including the late-1990s dot-com frenzy, who then invested in or helped steer later waves of technology.

The new AI billionaires include Alexandr Wang and Lucy Guo, who founded Scale AI, a data-labelling startup that received a $14.3 billion investment from Meta in June. The founders of the AI coding startup Cursor — Michael Truell, Sualeh Asif, Aman Sanger and Arvid Lunnemark — entered the billionaire ranks when their company was valued at $27 billion in a funding round last month.

The entrepreneurs behind Perplexity (an AI search engine), Mercor (an AI data startup), Figure AI (a maker of humanoid robots), Safe Superintelligence (an AI lab), Harvey (an AI legal software startup) and Thinking Machines Lab (an AI lab) are in the nine-figure club as well, according to the companies or people close to the startups, as well as data from startup tracker PitchBook and news reports. Most reached that point after the valuations of their privately held companies soared this year, turning their company stock into gold mines.

Jai Das, a partner at Sapphire Ventures, a Silicon Valley venture capital firm, likened the new billionaires to the railroad barons of the 1890s Gilded Age who leaned into that era's technology boom. But he cautioned that their wealth could be fleeting if the startups did not live up to their promise.

"The question is which of these companies is going to survive," Das said. "And which of these founders can actually end up really being true billionaires and not just paper billionaires."

Here's what to know about them.

They became billionaires quickly.

Elon Musk's journey to billionaire took years. After becoming a millionaire when one of his early ventures was sold to eBay in 2002, the tech entrepreneur did not turn into a billionaire until he was leading the electric carmaker Tesla and had started the rocket company SpaceX.

In contrast, most of the new AI billionaires founded their companies less than three years ago after OpenAI released ChatGPT, and then saw investors rapidly bid up the values of their firms.

Mira Murati, 37, a former top executive at OpenAI, announced her AI startup, Thinking Machines Lab, only in February. By June, the startup had hit a $10 billion valuation without releasing a single product. (The startup, which declined to comment, has since released one.)

Ilya Sutskever, 39, another former top OpenAI executive, launched Safe Superintelligence in June 2024. The company has not unveiled a product but is valued at $32 billion after raising $2 billion this year, according to PitchBook. Safe Superintelligence declined to comment.

Brett Adcock, 39, the CEO of Figure AI, founded the company in 2022. His net worth stands at $19.5 billion, Figure AI said. Aravind Srinivas, 31, the CEO of Perplexity, also created his company in 2022; it is valued at about $20 billion, according to PitchBook.

Perplexity said Srinivas was not focused on his wealth and "prefers to live modestly," adding that the company is searching for wisdom, which "is far more important than the search for wealth."

The wealth accumulation has been especially rapid this year. Harvey, which is based in San Francisco, raised money in February, June and this month. Each time, the company's valuation soared, reaching $8 billion from $3 billion in February. That catapulted the wealth of Harvey's founders, Winston Weinberg and Gabe Pereyra.

Weinberg, 30, who lives with Pereyra, 34, and a third roommate, said he did not think much about riches. "Yeah, sure it's in the billions, but it's on paper," he said.

The exception to the speed is Scale AI, which grew relatively quietly until Meta's investment.

Mark Zuckerberg, Meta's CEO, tapped Scale AI's Wang, 28, to be his chief AI officer. Guo, 31, left the startup in 2018 and has started a venture capital firm and Passes, a platform for influencers to make money from their content.

Scale AI and Meta declined to comment, and Guo did not respond to a request for comment.

They are under 40 years old.

Youth is a hallmark of tech booms. Larry Page and Sergey Brin were in their 20s when they founded Google in 1998. Zuckerberg was 19 when he founded Facebook in 2004.

The latest AI billionaires are also youthful. "Like the original Gilded Age and like the dot-com boom, this AI moment is making some very young people very, very, very rich, very quickly," said Margaret O'Mara, a history professor at the University of Washington who focuses on the tech economy.

Among them are the 22-year-old founders of Mercor. Brendan Foody, the CEO, dropped out of Georgetown University in 2023 after founding the company with two high school friends, Adarsh Hiremath, the chief technology officer, and Surya Midha, the chair. Mercor, which declined to comment, was valued at $10 billion in an October funding round.

Other young billionaires include Truell, the 24-year-old CEO of Cursor, and his co-founders, Asif, Sanger and Lunnemark, who are also in their 20s. They met at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and dropped out in 2022. A $2.3 billion funding round last month brought the valuation of their startup — also known by its parent company's name, Anysphere — to $27 billion, according to PitchBook.

Cursor did not respond to requests for comment. Most are men.

The AI boom has elevated mostly male founders to billionaire status, a pattern in tech cycles. Only a few women — such as Guo and Murati—have reached that wealth level. The AI craze has amplified the "homogeneity" of those who are part of this boom, O'Mara said.

In many ways, this AI boom mirrors earlier tech manias: extraordinary wealth created at extraordinary speed, concentrated among a small, youthful and largely male cohort. Whether today's AI founders mature into enduring industrial barons or fade as valuations collide with reality remains an open question. For now, their fortunes rest less on proven products than on belief — belief that artificial intelligence will reshape economies as decisively as railroads, electricity or the Internet once did.

The New York Times

(Clockwise from top left)Mercor's founders, from left, Adarsh Hiremath, Brendan Foody and Surya Midha; Alexandr Wang and Lucy Guo, the founders of Scale AI; Winston Weinberg, left, and Gabriel Pereyra, the founders of Harvey. NYT

Clearing the road for insurance mergers

SIDHARRTH SHANKAR AND SHIVANGI TALWAR

Parliament has introduced and passed the Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Bill, 2025 (Bill). The bill now awaits the President's assent to come into force.

The Bill marks a significant step in the central government's efforts to modernise the insurance regulatory framework and address the long-standing bottlenecks in the insurance sector. One notable reform concerns the framework governing mergers and transfers of insurance business.

Under the Insurance Act, 1938 (Insurance Act), an amalgamation of or transfer of insurance business is permitted only between two insurance companies of the same class, pursuant to a scheme prepared in accordance with applicable law and approved by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). A merger or transfer of insurance business of an insurance company with a non-insurance company is prohibited.

This restriction came under sustained scrutiny from 2016 onwards during the proposed merger of HDFC Life and Max Life. The transaction involved a step merger of Max Life (an insurance company) with its listed holding company Max Financial Services (a non-insurance company), followed by a merger of the combined entity with HDFC Life. After much debate, the IRDAI rejected the transaction on the ground that the Insurance Act permits mergers only between two insurance companies of the same class. Even though the merger of Max Life with Max Financial Services was an intermediate step and the ultimate merged entity, HDFC Life, would have remained an insurance company, the transaction fell foul of the statutory prohibition.

Judicial interpretation has not fully aligned with this restrictive regulatory approach. In Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India vs. Shriram General Insurance Company Limited, the Chennai Bench of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) held that Section 35 of the Insurance Act pertains to mergers or transfers of insurance business between insurance companies, and a merger between an insurance company and a non-insurance company does not fall within the scope of that provision. The NCLAT rejected the IRDAI's contention that Section 35 implicitly prohibits such mergers merely because it does not expressly permit them.

Under the Bill, the insurance business of an insurance company or the non-insurance business of a company may be transferred to or amalgamated with the insurance business of another insurer, subject to the prior approval of the IRDAI. Crucially, the resultant entity must always be an insurance company.

While the Bill suggests the amalgamation of insurance and non-insurance business, the practical feasibility of such transactions may depend on whether the central government and the IRDAI permit insurers to undertake additional notified business activities beyond the core function of effecting insurance contracts.

This reform could enable non-insurance companies to enter the insurance sector through amalgamation, potentially bypassing the time-consuming and onerous process of obtaining a fresh insurance licence. It also introduces greater flexibility for promoter groups and investors, facilitating group-level restructurings and exits.

At present, amalgamation and transfer of insurance business under the Insurance Act, read with the IRDAI (Registration, Capital Structure, Transfer of Shares and Amalgamation of Indian Insurance Companies) Regulations, 2024, broadly involve the following steps:

- the insurer filing a notice of intention, notifying the IRDAI of the transaction;
- the insurer filing an application seeking 'in principle' approval from the IRDAI within two months from filing the notice of intention;
- upon receipt of such approval, the transacting insurers approach other regulatory authorities --including the National Company Law Tribunal, Reserve Bank of India, Securities Exchange Board of India, and Competition Commission of India, as applicable; and
- final approval being granted by the IRDAI after approvals from other regulatory authorities have been obtained.

This process is cumbersome and does not allow regulatory approvals to be sought concurrently. Given the reformist thrust of the Bill, there is a strong case for re-examining this approval mechanism. A single-window clearance process led by the IRDAI could significantly reduce such issues while preserving supervisory oversight.

(Sidharrth is a senior partner and co-chair at a leading law firm; Shivangi is a partner at the law firm)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 1976

Law soon to check high rents

Bangalore, Dec. 31
The Karnataka Government is contemplating legal measures to put down the abnormal rise in house rents in urban areas, it was learnt here today. The proposed legislation seeks to take away the exemption enjoyed at present by new houses for five years from the purview of the Rent Control Act and makes the law applicable to all houses from the date they are ready for occupation. It will also bar persons owning houses in the city or town of their habitation renting out their houses and living in rented houses.

25 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 2001

Killer diseases stalk Padre village

Mangalore, Dec 31
Death seems to rain from above in Padre village situated exactly on the border between Karnataka (Dakshina Kannada) and Kerala (Kasaragod). Technically, it belongs to Kasaragod district. A trail of destruction in the form of deadly diseases has caught up with this village sparing neither man nor animal. In the recent past, a series of disturbing incidences of cancer, psychiatric cases, epilepsy, asthma, infertility and suicide in the village, have noticeably increased, according to the villagers.

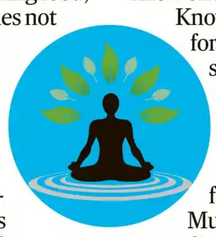
OASIS | NAZEER AHMED KAZI

Know thy neighbour

The principle of 'know thy neighbour' carries deep meaning across all religions. It reminds humanity that peaceful living begins with understanding, compassion, and respect for the people around us.

Remarkably, the world's major faith traditions — Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism — emphasise the same value, proving that unity is rooted in shared moral teaching.

The *Bhagavad Gita* expresses the idea of seeing the same divine presence in all beings: "The wise sees the same Supreme Lord dwelling in all" (*Gita* 6:29). When one recognises the divine spark within every person, treating neighbours with respect becomes natural. Hindu scriptures also promote *seva*, selfless service, as a path to spiritual growth.



Helping a neighbour, offering food, or providing comfort becomes not just a social act but a sacred offering. Vedic teachings further emphasise harmony through concepts like *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the world is one family). This timeless idea encourages people to view neighbours not as strangers but as members of an extended global family. The *Qur'an* encourages believers to honour human diversity and build harmonious relationships. A well-known verse states: "O mankind, we created you from a male and female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another" (*Qur'an* 49:13).

Knowing one's neighbour is therefore not just a courtesy but a spiritual duty. Islam repeatedly stresses kindness, visiting the sick, helping those in need and treating neighbours with dignity, regardless of faith or background. Prophet Muhammad said, "He is not a Muslim who fills his stomach while his neighbour remains hungry."

Jesus emphasises love as the foundation of all moral living. One of his most famous teachings is 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Mark 12:13). Christians are encouraged to help those in need and show mercy as an expression of God's love. Jesus loved the poor, sick, and outcast – even those who persecuted him. In Buddhism, it is *bodhichitta* – the awakened mind that seeks enlightenment for the sake of all beings. Neighbours who communicate and support each other create safer, kinder, and more resilient environments. Yet in modern life, many people remain distant from those living next door. 'Know thy neighbour' is not merely advice; it's a universal spiritual principle that brings harmony, compassion, and unity, fulfilling the deepest hopes of every faith tradition.

Army's animal warriors to march on Kartavya Path this Republic Day

Remount & Veterinary Corps will showcase its non-human recruits' role in frontier ops

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

An unusual, silent marching contingent led by two Bactrian camels from Ladakh will roll down the Kartavya Path on this Republic Day.

The camels will be followed by four Zanskar ponies, four raptors, 10 Indian-breed army dogs, and six conventional military dogs as the Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) of the Indian Army will showcase the critical role played by animals in safeguarding the nation's most challenging frontiers.

Leading the column will be the hardy Bactrian camels, recently inducted for operations in the cold deserts of Ladakh.

A practice for the Indian Army showcasing the critical role played by animals in safeguarding the nation's most challenging frontiers.

Perfectly adapted to extreme cold, thin air and altitudes above 15,000 feet, these camels can carry 250-kg loads across long distances with minimal water and feed.

"Their induction has significantly enhanced logistical support and mounted patrolling capability along the Line of Actual Control," said an officer.

While the Border Security Force's colourful camel contingent is a regular on the central boulevard, this will be for the first time the double-humped ungulates will reportedly make an appearance.

Ponies, pups, and more

Marching alongside will be Zanskar ponies — a rare and indigenous mountain equestrian breed from Ladakh.

Despite their small stature, these ponies are renowned for extraordinary endurance, carrying 40-60 kg over long distances at altitudes exceeding 15,000 feet and in temperatures dropping to -40° Celsius.

Since their induction in 2020, they have served in some of the harshest terrains, including the Siachen Glacier.

Beyond logistics, they play a key role in mounted patrols, sometimes covering up to 70 km in a single day, standing shoulder to shoulder with soldiers in high-risk areas.

Adding sharp-eyed vigilance to the formation will be four raptors, used for bird-strike control and surveillance, reflecting the army's innovative use of their natural capabilities for operational safety and effectiveness.

A major highlight will be the dogs, often called "Silent Warriors" of the Indian Army. Raised, trained and nurtured at Meerut's RVC Centre and College, these dogs support troops in counter-terrorism operations, explosive and mine detection, tracking, guarding, disaster response, and search-and-rescue missions.

The army has been inducting indigenous dog breeds such as the Mudhol Hound, Rampur Hound, Chippiparai, Kombai, and Rajapalayam.

Their presence on Kartavya Path is expected to mark successful integration of such native breeds into specialised military roles.

Followed Lord Rama's ideals during Op Sindoor: Rajnath

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Rajnath Singh

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday said that India was so much associated with Lord Rama's ideals that it followed them even during Operation Sindoor, when India attacked terror camps inside Pakistan in May, in response to the Pahalgham terror attack.

"Lord Rama's maryada (dignity) is our identity... Lord Rama never crossed the limits of maryada even while fighting Ravana," Singh said while addressing a gathering in Ayodhya after attending the rituals on the occasion of the second anniversary of Ram Lalla idol consecration.

"We too did the same during Operation Sindoor... We did not act indiscriminately... it was a controlled action... we targeted only the terror hubs... Operation Sindoor proved that India was the real heir to Lord Rama's legacy," he said.

He also termed the Ram Temple movement as the biggest in the world. "The construction of the Ram Temple is one of the grand narratives in the world... there was no other movement in the world bigger than the Ram Temple movement." He said that efforts were on to construct a Janaki at Sitamarhi.

Contaminated water has claimed 7 lives in Indore: Mayor

INDORE, PTI: Seven persons have died so far due to diarrhoea and vomiting after allegedly consuming contaminated water in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh, its Mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava confirmed on Wednesday amid conflicting claims over the number of fatalities.

"The health department has reported three deaths due to the diarrhoea outbreak in the Bhagirathpura area. But to my knowledge, four more people suffering from the disease were brought to hospitals and they too died," he said.

Bhargava said a preliminary assessment suggested that drainage water entered the drinking water pipeline due to leakage, which triggered an outbreak of diarrhoea and vomiting in the Bhagirathpura area.

Meanwhile, District Magistrate Shivam Verma said 149 patients suffering from the disease have been admitted to 27 hospitals across the city and their health condition is being monitored.

Isro conducts ground test of SSLV third stage at Sriharikota

BENGALURU, PTI: Isro has carried out a successful static test of an improved version of the third stage of SSLV at the Solid Motor Static Test Facility of Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

The test was conducted on Tuesday.

The Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) is a three-stage all-solid launch vehicle developed by Isro, which is amenable to industrial production and can meet launch-on-demand with a quick turnaround time between launches, Isro said in a statement. "The upper stage or third stage solid motor delivers as high as 4 km/s velocity to the launch vehicle and employs a monolithic composite motor case and a free-standing nozzle divergent to limit the stage inert mass," it added.

Shah cracks whip on Bengal BJP

Calls for unity, puts party in poll mode for 2026

KOLKATA, DHNS

Union Home Minister and the BJP's chief poll strategist, Amit Shah, spent the last day of 2025 trying to set the saffron party's house in West Bengal in order and add momentum to its preparations for taking on the Trinamool Congress in the 2026 Assembly elections.

Shah concluded his three-day visit to the city on Wednesday with a meeting of legislators, parliamentarians, and councillors, along with leaders holding key positions in party organisations.

He asked for ending factionalism and brought LoP Suvendu Adhikari and former state president Dilip Ghosh together.

Shah put the party's state machinery in poll mode and asked the representatives to spend at least four days a week in their respective constituencies and hold at least five meetings daily. He made it clear that aspirants for contesting the assembly elections would have to prove their mettle over the next three months.

"I can't say much, but you will see an active Dilip Ghosh in the 2026 polls. I was called to share my experiences and opinions," Ghosh, who has been sulking after being allegedly sidelined, told journalists after the meeting.

The relations between Ghosh and Adhikari turned sour after the veteran leader was asked to contest from the Bardhaman-Durgapur Lok Sabha constituency in the 2024 parliamentary elections, instead of Medinipur, where he had won in 2019.

Adhikari, according to party insiders, played a key role in changing the constituency of Ghosh, who ultimately lost to TMC's Kirti Azad.

Ghosh defied the party's call for boycotting the inauguration of Lord Jagannath's temple in Digha. He not only attended the event on April 30 but also had a courtesy meeting with Mamata Banerjee. "Every BJP activist and supporter has been energised by the visit of Amit Shah ji. We will win the 2026 polls and bring about true change in this state," Adhikari said on Wednesday.

A BJP leader said Shah has said that he would spend a few days of every month in West Bengal over the next three months to boost the party's morale during the run-up to the elections.

Amit Shah during a visit to the 'Thanthania Kalibari' temple in Kolkata on Wednesday. PTI

PARTY RESET

- Amit Shah directs BJP public representatives to intensify grassroots outreach by spending at least four days a week in their constituencies
- Asks party leaders to "prove their worth" to be eligible for a party ticket to contest the Assembly elections

TMC delegation accuses EC chief of 'weaponising' voter lists with SIR

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Insisting that "vote chori" (vote theft) was not happening through electronic voting machines (EVMs) but via electoral rolls, the Trinamool Congress on Wednesday accused Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar of "weaponising" voter lists, while also daring him to issue circulars for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls rather than using WhatsApp to pass instructions.

TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee led a 10-MP delegation to the Election Commission (EC) to raise issues related to the SIR in West Bengal. He recalled that Kumar was the cooperation secretary under Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and claimed it was "no coincidence" that he was appointed the CEC, alleging he was sent to "destroy" the Constitution and the poll body.

TMC leaders including Abhishek Banerjee, Saket Gokhale, and Pradip Mazumdar, address the media after a meeting with CEC Gyanesh Kumar in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

Appealing to other parties to unitedly fight electoral malpractices, he also said outfits like the Congress, AAP, RJD, and the NCP (SP) failed to catch "vote chori", and that was why the BJP "managed to win" the Haryana, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Bihar Assembly elections.

In response, the EC told the delegation that the TMC should ensure that its ground representatives are not involved in threatening any staff, while also warning that intimidation of any electoral staff — including BLOs, EROs, AEROs and observers — would not be tolerated. It asked the West Bengal government to immediately release the enhanced honorarium to each BLO.

After the nearly 2.5-hour meeting, Banerjee told reporters that there are discrepancies in the Bengal SIR, and that the EC was not giving clear answers to their questions and demands. He claimed the EC refused to provide a list of voters marked as having submitted enumeration forms with "logical discrepancies".

"What is the ECI trying to hide?... How can you clean a list by hiding details?... What algorithms and software are being run to disenfranchise and remove 50 lakh to 1 crore voters (in various states)?" he asked.

Banerjee also claimed that voters who submitted documents and were cleared during the exercise were called for hearings, to which the EC responded that there could be technical flaws in their app.

2 major highway projects approved in Maha, Odisha

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Central government on Wednesday approved two major highway projects — one construction and one widening — in Maharashtra and Odisha with an investment of over Rs 20,500 crore.

With this, the NDA government has approved highway projects worth a total of Rs 2.18 lakh crore since June 2024.

Infrastructure projects worth over Rs 12.06 lakh crore — including highways, metro, airports, and ports — have been approved since June 2024, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told reporters here.

The Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently approved the construction of the six-lane greenfield access-controlled Nashik-Solapur-Akkalkot Corridor in Maharashtra on a Build-Own-Transfer (BOT-Toll) mode, he said.

I.N.D.I.A bloc faces hurdles as members drift apart, form new coalitions

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The I.N.D.I.A bloc may face internal hurdles in 2026, as its constituent parties appear to be drifting apart in states.

J&K Chief Minister and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah has already started reading the bloc's obituary, while the Left parties are complaining about the alliance leader Congress' reluctance in holding consultations to design protests against the ruling BJP.

While the bloc is united in Parliament, the bonhomie has not translated into joint actions on the ground.

Though leaders insist that the bloc was limited to the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls united its constituents on the streets on multiple occasions. However, the resulting impetus did not improve matters.

With the AAP quitting the bloc in late 2024 before the Delhi Assembly elections, the Haryana and Maharashtra Assembly election losses and an unimpressive J&K show raised questions about the Congress' leadership capabilities.

AILING ALLIANCE?

- J&K CM and NC leader Omar Abdullah is already predicting bloc's end
- Left parties are complaining about bloc-leader Congress' reluctance in holding meetings to plan anti-BJP protests
- AAP quit the bloc in late 2024 before the Delhi Assembly polls

Boasting of no electoral alliance with the Congress in its history, the Trinamool Congress now does not allow itself to be seen together with the national party in the run-up to the West Bengal polls. With the Kerala elections in sight, even the CPM has sharpened its weapons against the Congress.

However, real trouble is elsewhere: Sections of the Congress in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra want to secede from years-old alliances. There is also a simmering tension among allies in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand as well, for similar reasons.

With the Samajwadi Party appearing to rethink an alliance with the Congress for the 2027 UP Assembly polls after the latter's poor Bihar show, the grand old party is revamping its organisation and making some other moves. The Congress' UP in-charge Avinash Pande has even said that the BSP could be inducted into I.N.D.I.A bloc if Mayawati agreed.

In both Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, middle-level leaders with electoral aspirations claim restrictive alliances are shattering their dreams.

In Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena (UBT)-MNS and NCP (SP)-NCP tie-ups for local-body polls have set tongues wagging.

Meanwhile, though the Congress' central leadership may not entertain the thought of leaving the DMK's side in Tamil Nadu, a section in the party wants to explore electoral possibilities with the Vijay-led TVK, believing that it needs to come out of the Dravidian outfit's shadow.

The Congress and the RJD are not on good terms in Bihar, while the JMM, Congress, and the RJD are at loggerheads in Jharkhand.

48 killed in UP encounters in 2025, highest in 8 years

LUCKNOW, DNS: As many as 48 criminals, the highest since Yogi Adityanath took over as Chief Minister in 2017, were killed in encounters with the police in Uttar Pradesh in 2025.

UP police chief Rajeev Krishna told reporters on Wednesday that 266 criminals were killed in the past eight and a half years (since Adityanath became the CM) in police encounters, while around 11,000 were injured during the same period.

"Under the zero-tolerance policy of the government, 48 criminals were killed in encounters in 2025, and nine were awarded death sentences," Krishna said. He also said that 18 cops were killed and more than 1,700 were injured while fighting the criminals.

Krishna said that more than 33,000 criminals, who carried rewards on their heads, were arrested.

The DGP further said that the state police had fared well on tackling crimes and corruption in the past years and had taken strict steps against terrorists, mafia, cyber criminals, drug syndicates and corrupt officials.

Krishna claimed that no communal riots took place in the state in the past eight and a half years. He said the police would focus on developing AI infrastructure and checking crimes against women in the new year.

PM Modi stresses 'reform, perform, transform' mantra

NEW DELHI, PTI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday stressed on the mantra of reform, perform and transform at the 50th meeting of PRAGATI, which accelerated projects worth more than Rs 85 lakh crore over the past decade.

Narendra Modi

Chairing the meeting, the prime minister emphasised the use of technology in each and every phase of a project life cycle.

The Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation (PRAGATI) platform must be strengthened further in the years ahead to ensure faster execution, higher quality and measurable outcomes for the citizens, he said.

During the meeting, the prime minister reviewed five critical infrastructure projects across sectors, including road, railways, power, water resources, and coal.

"These projects span five states, with a cumulative cost of more than Rs 40,000 crore," an official statement said.

It said during a review of the PM SHRI scheme, the prime minister emphasised that the initiative must become a national benchmark for holistic and future-ready school education with outcome-oriented rather than infrastructure-centric implementation.

He also asked the chief secretaries to closely monitor the PM SHRI scheme.

The prime minister further emphasised that efforts must be made for making the PM SHRI schools benchmarks for other schools of the state governments.

He also suggested that senior officers of the government should undertake field visits to evaluate the performance of the PM SHRI schools.

PRAGATI is essential to sustain the reform momentum, Modi said.

LATEST LINGO

6 words that defined India's politics, policies & pollution in 2025

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Some words with deeply dividing political connotations were on every Indians' lips in 2025. *DH* does a quick recap:

- **SIR:** The word found a new meaning when the EC announced the special intensive revision of electoral rolls on June 24. First in Bihar and then in 12 states and Union Territories, the pruning of the voter list saw the EC facing accusations of disenfranchising people. The Opposition hit the streets, and even some NDA partners raised concerns. Several booth-level officers died in the second phase, amid claims of a heavy workload.

- **Vote Chori:** Anti-SIR protests donated "vote chori" (vote theft) to the country's political lexicon in July. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi popularised it while highlighting a Brazilian woman's photo in voter rolls and how UP politicians became voters in Haryana, among other things. Rahul went on to allege that the BJP managed to win around 100 seats using "vote chori".
- **G RAM G:** Towards the end of the year, out of the blue came an invocation of Ram in an acronym of a law that replaced MGNREGA named after Mahatma Gandhi. More than the name change, the Opposition and activists found fault with the change in the new supply-driven scheme in which states would have to shell out money.
- **Operation Sindoor:** The words spelt revenge for a dastardly terror strike in Pahalgam. Feminists deplored the coinage while the Opposition criticised the Centre over what led to the attack, as well as the it's sudden halt. The Congress faced embarrassment as the government chose its leaders as members that went to other countries to explain India's stand on terrorism.
- **AQI:** Air Quality Index suddenly became a dinner-table buzzword as pollution rose in Delhi and elsewhere. Parliament did not debate the issue despite it being listed. Pointed questions on who was responsible and where central and state governments failed went unanswered.
- **'Ghuspethiya' (Infiltrator):** In light of the SIR and upcoming Assam and West Bengal Assembly polls, this was one of the most-used words. The EC unofficially spoke about finding foreigners in Bihar's electoral rolls, but no numbers were given. Meanwhile, PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah continue to raise it.

With eye on polls, DMK to add cash in Pongal gift hampers

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

With an eye on the April-May Assembly elections, the DMK government in Tamil Nadu has decided to dole out a cash component along with Pongal gift hampers to eligible ration card holders.

While Rs 1,000 was distributed to each family in 2023 and 2024, the cash component was discontinued in 2025 due to 'severe financial constraints'.

"The cash prize will be a substantial amount," a source aware of the development told *DH*, adding that an official announcement in this regard will be made by Chief Minister M K Stalin in a couple of days.

Though the source refused to say how much they will receive along with the gift hampers, speculation is rife that it could be anywhere between Rs 3,000 to Rs 5,000.

The source explained that the government has decided on the 'substantial amount', keeping in mind that there was no cash component in the Pongal hampers distributed in 2025.

Including the cash component, as Pongal gift is a political decision, as assembly elections are scheduled for April-May 2026. In 2021, months before the assembly elections, the AIADMK government handed out Rs 2,500 to each family.

Increasing debt

The move also comes at a time when the Tamil Nadu government is under criticism from several quarters over its increasing debt, which currently stands at Rs 9.21 lakh crore. As the principal opposition party from 2016-2021, the DMK government tore into the AIADMK for the state's growing debt.

DMK leaders said the Pongal cash gift, which will be in addition to the Rs 1,000 cash assistance to over 1.31 crore women, will help the party reach out to families ahead of the elections.

Assam couple burnt alive on suspicion of witchcraft

DIPHU (ASSAM), PTI: A group of people burnt alive a couple in a village in Karbi Anglong district of Assam, suspecting them to be involved in witchcraft, police said on Wednesday.

The incident occured in the Howraghat area on Tuesday night. "The miscreants first attacked the couple with sharp weapons inside their house. After that, they burnt the house, and the couple died in the fire," the police said.

The villagers accused the deceased of practising witchcraft and bringing ill effects to the surrounding area, the official said.

The deceased have been identified as Gardi Birowa (43) and Mira Birowa (33).

Winter charm brings Kashmir back on travel list

Welcome signs abound after lull following April 22 terror attack

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

Tourists at the snow-laden Kongdori, in Gulmarg, Baramullah district, Jammu and Kashmir, on Wednesday. PTI

Kashmir is once again welcoming tourists in growing numbers after a lull following the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam: Snowfall, heightened security confidence, and sustained efforts by the tourism sector are helping restore travel sentiment across the Valley.

Officials said tourist footfall was increasing, which was reassuring travellers planning winter holidays and bringing relief to thousands of families whose livelihoods depend on tourism.

Kashmir's Director of Tourism Syed Qamar Sajad said the terror attack's impact was short-lived and that confidence among visitors improved steadily.

"There was a temporary setback, but the response from tourists has been very encouraging. Arrivals have stabilised, and people are once again choosing Kashmir for their holidays," said Sajad.

According to official figures, the Kashmir Valley recorded nearly 10.5 lakh tourist arrivals in 2025, including over 4 lakh Amarnath Yatra pilgrims.

While this is lower than the exceptional numbers seen in 2024, when nearly 35 lakh tourists — including over 5 lakh pilgrims — visited the Valley, tourism officials said the current trend reflected a strong and steady recovery.

Winter destinations, particularly Gulmarg, are witnessing a visible resurgence ahead of the New Year.

The resort town has taken on a festive look, with hotels reporting healthy occupancy, ski slopes buzzing with activity, and tourists arriving in good numbers to experience snow-covered landscapes.

Hoteliers, pony operators, and ski instructors say the revival is evident on the ground. "Bookings for the New Year are strong, and tourists are arriving with confidence. The mood here is positive," said a Gulmarg hotel-owner.

Tourists are also flocking to other popular winter destinations, such as Pahalgam, Sonamarg, and Srinagar, drawn by snowfall forecasts, winter sports, and the Valley's seasonal beauty.

Travel operators say families, honeymooners, and adventure enthusiasts make up most of those arriving as tourists.

'Security strengthened'

Officials stressed that security arrangements and visitor-facilitation measures had been strengthened to ensure a safe and comfortable experience for them.

Tourism authorities are also said to be working closely with local stakeholders to maintain service standards and manage tourist flow during peak winter months.

For travellers planning a visit, the current season offers a blend of snow, festivities and tranquillity.

J&K extends VPN ban across several districts

SRINAGAR, DHNS: Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have expanded a ban on the use of Virtual Private Network (VPN) services across several districts of the Union Territory, citing their alleged misuse to bypass lawful surveillance and pose threats to public order and national security.

According to official orders issued by district administrations, the use of VPN services has been suspended for a period of two months following security reviews and police inputs. Officials said VPNs were increasingly being used to mask online identities, circumvent internet restrictions and access platforms blocked under local laws.

Divisional Commissioner (Kashmir) Anshul Garg said the decision was taken in the overall interest of society.

"Such measures are imposed whenever required to prevent misuse by anti-social elements. Many people unknowingly get caught up in the misuse of these networks. These decisions are based on security assessments carried out by the district magistrates," Garg said.

Faridabad woman gang-raped in moving van; two arrested

FARIDABAD, PTI

A 25-year-old woman was allegedly gang-raped in a moving van and pushed out of the vehicle on a deserted road in Faridabad in the early hours of Tuesday, police said on Wednesday.

Two men accused in the case have been arrested and sent to judicial custody.

The assault of the mother of three, which brings back the horror of the Nirbhaya rape on another cold December night 13 years ago, took place in the early hours of Tuesday on the winding, little-populated Gurgaon-Faridabad, officials said.

The woman sustained serious head and facial injuries and is undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Faridabad. Her condition remains critical, and she is not yet fit to record a statement, police said.

According to police, the woman, who had been staying with her parents following marital issues, was waiting for transport when the two accused offered her a lift. Instead of taking her to her destination, they allegedly drove towards Gurugram and sexually assaulted her inside the van.

She was driven around through the night and thrown out of the vehicle that was moving at a speed of over 90 kmph near Raja Chowk in Faridabad around 3 am.

Bleeding profusely, the woman managed to call her sister, who reached the spot and took her to the hospital.

Given the seriousness of her injuries, the doctors advised that she be taken to Delhi, but the family admitted her to the private hospital. A doctor at the hospital said she had suffered significant injuries, including broken facial cavities and a dislocated shoulder.

"Preparations are underway for surgery and the woman is out of danger. It appears the injuries were caused by a hard object or by being thrown onto the road. Samples have been sent to the FSL for examination by police," he said.

The horrific incident has exposed the failure of law and order in BJP-ruled Haryana, state Congress president Rao Narendra Singh said.

Exactly 12 years ago in December 2012, a young physiotherapy intern, who came to be known as Nirbhaya, the fearless one, was brutally gang-raped in a moving bus and thrown out near the Delhi airport, her injuries so grievous that she died 13 days later in a Singapore hospital.

The case led to an overhaul of rape laws in the country.

Man held for desecrating Shiva Lingam in Andhra temple

HYDERABAD, DHNS: A man was arrested for desecrating the Shiva Lingam at the historic Draksharamam temple in Andhra Pradesh.

On Wednesday, District SP Rahul Meena identified the accused as Sheelam Srinivas, a resident of the Thotapeta village in the Ramachandrapuram mandal, saying he vandalised the Lingam on early on Tuesday morning. The incident came to light later in the day.

According to the police, Srinivas had longstanding differences with temple employees over an irrigation canal that ran through land he owned.

The desecration occurred near the northern gopuram of the Bhimeswara temple, on the banks of the Sapta Godavari, triggering outrage among devotees. The police deployed dog squads and forensic experts, and formed six special teams to apprehend the accused.

Meena said Srinivas carried out the act around 1 am after seeing the temple priest performing rituals at the Lingam. He allegedly intended implicate the priest.

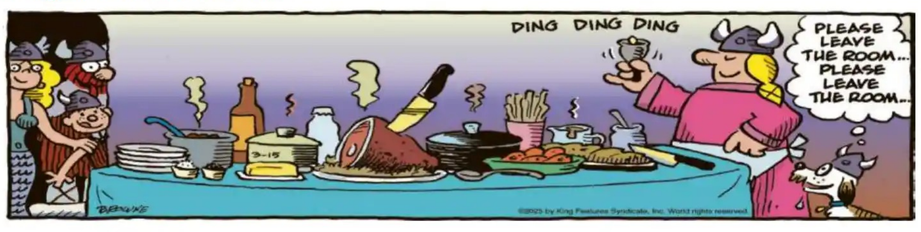
MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

HAPPY NATIONAL BAKER DAY!
THANKS!!
IT'S SO NICE TO HAVE A HOLIDAY FOR US BAKERS!
WHAT WILL YOU DO TO CELEBRATE?
BAKE MYSELF A CAKE, OF COURSE!
OF COURSE!

Hagar The Horrible



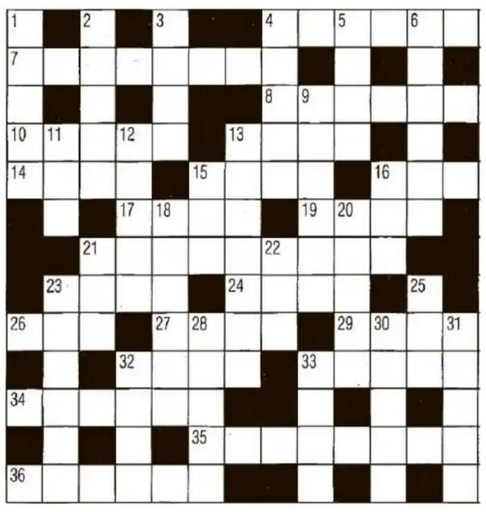
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

STILL HITTING BALLS WITH THE GARAGE, I SEE...
IT'S GOOD PRACTICE.. HE GETS EVERYTHING BACK
I WAS SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T PLAY DOUBLES AT WIMBLEDON THIS YEAR..
THE GARAGE HATES TO FLY

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12322



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
4 A 'suit' to change into! (6)
7 Handily provides us with fresh fuel for an early finish (8)
8 Very noisy in breaking a rule so as to annoy (6)
10 As many would say, a familiar form of therapy (5)
13 Is a bigheaded one so idle? (4)
14 A circle of sanctitude (4)
15 In South Africa, a bit of a find for an artist (4)
16 Go astray out of sheer terror (3)
17 It's noisily raised (4)
19 A bearskin covers both of them (4)
21 Not necessarily sea power (4,5)
23 Unlike a little boy, totally toyless! (4)
24 Keep going to the back of the queue (4)
26 Negative directions from Number Ten, initially (3)
27 Star dear to the French (4)
29 Examination of the mouth? (4)
32 Said wrongly to be something elevating (4)
33 He's able to burn with love (5)
34 The look of a peer? (6)
35 The fellow had been lying to him, possibly in prison (8)
36 National Service! (6)

DOWN
1 A backup idea where Notre Dame's concerned? (5)
2 Balance up again (5)
3 It's a dicey game (4)
4 Lord possibly born around the end of May (5)
5 Where nothing but coffee is served? (4)
6 They do a grinding job (6)
9 In cricket, informally, bowling them is child's play (6)
11 He gives a meaty performance (3)
12 It's quite proper to roam around a rail terminus (5)
13 Defeats in the 'foils'? (7)
15 The chap in front (3)
16 Before trimming the rent (3)
18 What can be handy for lubrication? (6)
20 He has his professional pretences (5)
21 On which to stand a drink? (3)
22 Sweep, perhaps (3)
23 It twists a quote outright! (6)
25 Is able to start and finish a dance (3)
28 Even a half one is knotty (5)
30 Is such a dean a countryman? (5)
31 The girl who nearly ruined Ronald (5)
32 A plant that can make many sick? (4)
33 As eaten by a bachelor as an afterthought? (4)

EASY

ACROSS
4 Take into custody (6)
7 Of Europe and Asia (8)
8 Deathly (6)
10 Hits flies (5)
13 Dispatch (4)
14 Very small (4)
15 The earth, ground (4)
16 Farm animal (3)
17 Bucket (4)
19 Particle of matter (4)
21 Act of receiving (9)
23 Hazard (4)
24 Assist (4)
26 Agent (3)
27 Fever (4)
29 A plant (4)
32 Old wound mark (4)
33 Climb up (5)
34 Rods (6)
35 Idiom (8)
36 Window shades (6)

DOWN
1 Banquet (5)
2 Of a town (5)
3 Poses a question (4)
4 Mountain system (5)
5 Peruse writing (4)
6 Rarely (6)
9 Necessitate (6)
11 Hairpiece (3)
12 Sorts, kinds (5)
13 Non-metallic element (7)
15 Perish (3)
16 Swindle (3)
18 Anti-aircraft fire (3-3)
20 Theme (5)
21 Rend (3)
22 Golfer's peg (3)
23 Hire charge (6)
25 Lubricant (3)
28 Pants (5)
30 Wet or showery (5)
31 Main drain (5)
32 Glance over quickly (4)
33 Auction (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12321

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Capped 7, A-pp-roach 8, Hogs 10, Loofah 11, Ass-E-rt 14, Pit 16, Tones 17, Rust 19, Felon 21, Model 22, F-ire-d 23, Best 26, Moses 28, Fax 29, Int-end 30, Buried 31, Unit 32, Slimming 33, S-age-ly.
DOWN: 1, Cal-l-er 2, Pro-fit 3, Dash 4, Bristol 5, Ta-Ken 6, Chits 8, Hops 9, Gat 12, Son 13, Re-a-MS 15, C-eded 18, (j) Un(ct)ion 19, For 20, Led 21, Mi-sname 22, Fee 23, B-a-ring 24, Exit 25, Tidily 26, Miss.-Y 27, Stain 28, Fun 30, Bugs.

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Circus 7, High wire 8, Tone 10, Ceased 11, Stride 14, Pet 16, Gamut 17, Lass 19, Het up 21, Put on 22, Satin 23, Fast 26, Sonic 28, Bun 29, Pranks 30, Tutors 31, Odin 32, Category 33, Smells.
DOWN: 1, Cancel 2, Closes 3, Shed 4, Shotgun 5, Minim 6, Beret 8, Taps 9, Net 12, Rap 13, Dupes 15, Let in 18, Actor 19, Hut 20, Ton 21, Package 22, Sin 23, Futile 24, Anon 25, Tosses 26, Spice 27, Nasty 28, Bud 30, Toys.

◆SU-DO-KU-6792◆

8	6					3		
			1				6	
7	4	3		6				5
	3	7	8			9		
2								3
		6			9	4	7	
3				1		7	8	6
	1				7			
		2					1	4

easy

SOLUTION TO 6791

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6	2	8	4	7	3	5	9	1
8	4	1	3	6	7	9	5	2
2	5	7	8	9	4	1	6	3
9	6	3	5	2	1	7	8	4
1	8	2	7	3	9	6	4	5
4	9	6	1	8	5	3	2	7
3	7	5	6	4	2	8	1	9

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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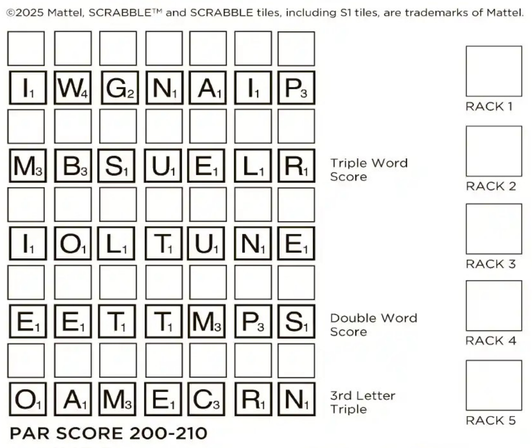
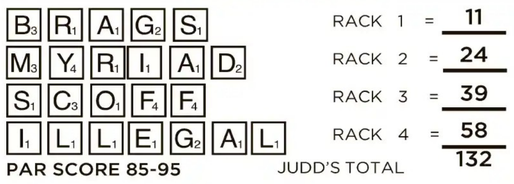

I1 W4 G2 N1 A1 I1 P3
M3 B3 S1 U1 E1 L1 R1
Triple Word Score
I1 O1 L1 T1 U1 N1 E1
E1 E1 T1 T1 M3 P3 S1
Double Word Score
O1 A1 M3 E1 C3 R1 N1
3rd Letter Triple
RACK 1
RACK 2
RACK 3
RACK 4
RACK 5

PAR SCORE 200-210
by JUDD

FIVE RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



RACK 1 = 11
RACK 2 = 24
RACK 3 = 39
RACK 4 = 58
JUDD'S TOTAL 132

PAR SCORE 85-95

HITORI-3246

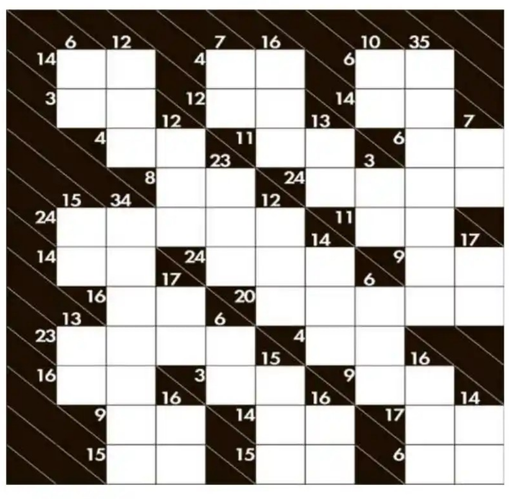
8	3	8	6	2	4	8	7
3	5	6	8	6	2	4	6
6	7	3	2	4	8	8	8
8	4	1	5	6	8	7	3
2	5	4	6	1	6	3	8
4	2	8	5	7	6	1	8
6	1	5	3	6	7	2	2
5	6	6	4	8	1	2	2

SOLUTION TO 3245

8	5	■	3	■	4	2	■
3	■	4	2	7	6	■	1
2	1	3	6	4	■	7	8
7	2	6	■	3	5	1	4
■	7	■	5	6	2	■	3
1	■	2	■	5	■	8	6
4	6	7	8	1	3	■	5
■	3	8	■	2	7	5	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

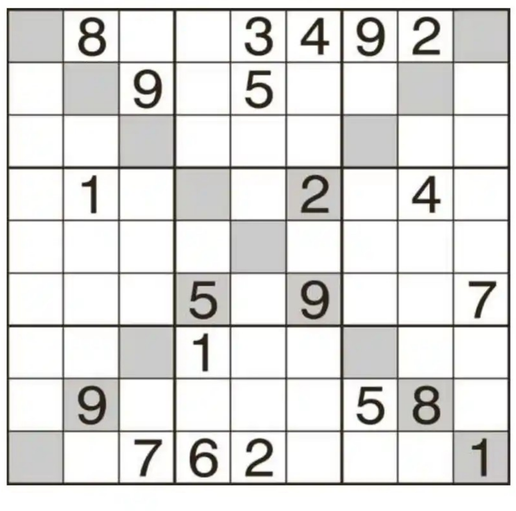
KAKURO- 3246



SOLUTION TO 3245

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3783



SOLUTION TO 3782

5	1	6	8	3	7	9	4	2
2	4	8	1	5	9	7	3	6
9	7	3	6	4	2	5	1	8
1	3	5	2	9	4	8	6	7
7	6	2	5	8	3	4	9	1
4	8	9	7	6	1	2	5	3
3	5	1	9	7	8	6	2	4
8	9	4	3	2	6	1	7	5
6	2	7	4	1	5	3	8	9

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SKLIY

ICLAL

OBRRKE

CUGORH

We've got enough orders to fill the next week. We'll just be behind a little.
We are not going to be able to get all these orders out today.
6/23

THEIR FIREWOOD BUSINESS WAS DOING SO WELL THAT THEY HAD A ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print the answer here: _____ (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: JUICE SPICY MARVEL NOBODY
Answer: Choosing what to study in college to graduate with a degree can be a — MAJOR DECISION

Xi: Taiwan reunification 'unstoppable'

Highlights construction of largest dam over Brahmaputra River

BEIJING, PTI

Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers his 2026 New Year message in Beijing on Wednesday. AP

Chinese President Xi Jinping, in his New Year address on Wednesday said Taiwan's reunification with China is "unstoppable" while projecting the country's growing defence advances, and highlighted the construction of the world's largest dam over Brahmaputra River.

Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait share a bond of blood and kinship, Xi said in his nationally televised 2026 New Year message.

"The reunification of our motherland, a trend of the times, is unstoppable," Xi said amid stepped up high-powered drills by the Chinese military in the last three days around the self-governing island. This is the sixth time since 2022 that China held intensified military drills using the latest air force jets, aircraft carriers, missiles and drones practising the capture of Taiwan.

In his address, Xi, 72, the longest-serving leader of the People's Republic of China also sought to project advances made by Beijing in economic, defence and tech sectors.

"Construction of the hydropower project at the lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo (Brahmaputra river) started," he said, referring to the Brahmaputra dam construction.

China formally started the construction of the USD 170 billion dam over Brahmaputra river in ecologically fragile Tibet, closer to the Indian border in Arunachal Pradesh, which evoked concerns of flooding in the lower riparian states of India and Bangladesh.

Xi also spoke of the commissioning of China's first aircraft carrier equipped with an electromagnetic catapult system. The ship named Fujian is the second such carrier in the world after the USS Gerald R. Ford.

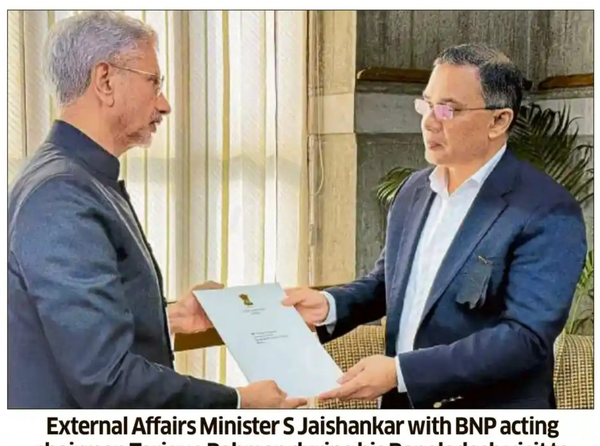
"Humanoid robots did kung fu kicks, and drones performed spectacular light shows," Xi said, referring to China's advances in AI.

On the Chinese economy, which is struggling with slow growth of around 5% relying more on declining exports, Xi said China's GDP is set to cross USD 20 trillion this year.

India reaches out to BNP ahead of Bangladesh polls

Jaishankar meets Tarique Rahman, skips interim chief Yunus

NEW DELHI, DHNS



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman during his Bangladesh visit to attend the funeral of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. PTI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday flew to Dhaka, where he attended the funeral of the recently deceased Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chief Begum Khaleda Zia and also met her son, Tarique Rahman, handing him a personal condolence letter from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Jaishankar, however, did not meet Muhammad Yunus, who became the head of the interim government in Dhaka after a mass agitation across Bangladesh in July–August 2024 that led to the fall of the Awami League government headed by Sheikh Hasina.

Relations between New Delhi and Yunus's regime in Dhaka have worsened over the past few weeks. Yunus, however, posted on social media a photograph of Jaishankar with Pakistan's National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, who represented Islamabad at Khaleda Zia's funeral. A source in New Delhi clarified that Jaishankar only exchanged pleasantries with Sadiq.

Khaleda Zia was Bangladesh's first woman Prime Minister and led the BNP, founded by her husband Ziaur Rahman in 1978, until her imprisonment in graft cases in 2018.

Tarique Rahman, who has been the de facto leader of the BNP for the past seven years, recently returned to Dhaka after a 17-year exile in London and formally took over the party's reins after his 80-year-old mother passed away on Tuesday.

He is likely to lead the BNP in the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2026. With the Awami League barred from the polls, the BNP has an edge over its former ally Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh and other parties. Tarique may emerge as the frontrunner for the office of Prime Minister.

Dhaka's relations with New Delhi had come under strain during Khaleda Zia's three terms as PM between 1991 and 2008. Her government allowed militant organisations operating in India's northeastern states to set up camps in Bangladesh.

She also turned down New Delhi's request to allow connectivity between India's landlocked northeastern states and the mainland through Bangladesh.

SON-RISE LIKELY?

- Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday attended funeral of BNP's Begum Khaleda Zia
- He also also met her son Tarique Rahman, handing him a personal condolence letter from PM Modi
- Tarique has been the de facto leader of the BNP for the past seven years
- With the Awami League barred from the upcoming Bangladesh polls, the BNP may win and Tarique could emerge as the frontrunner for the office of the prime minister.

Iran govt building attacked during protests

TEHRAN, AFP

A government building in southern Iran was attacked on Wednesday, authorities said, as the country's top prosecutor warned of a "decisive response" to any attempt to create instability after days of economic protests.

Spontaneous protests, driven by dissatisfaction at Iran's economic stagnation, began on Sunday in Tehran's largest mobile phone market, where shopkeepers shuttered their businesses, and have since drawn in students across the country.

"A portion of the provincial governors' office door and its glass were destroyed in an attack by a number of people," said Hamed Ostovar, the head of the judiciary in the city of Fasa, as quoted by the justice ministry's Mizan agency, without specifying how the attack was carried out.

The attack came after the country's prosecutor general said the protestor's economic concerns were legitimate, but warned action would be taken if necessary.

"Peaceful livelihood protests are part of social and understandable realities," Mohammad Movahedi-Azad told state media.

"Any attempt to turn economic protests into a tool of insecurity, destruction of public property, or implementation of externally-designed scenarios will inevitably be met with a legal, proportionate and decisive response."

His comments came days after the Mossad intelligence agency of Iran's arch-foe Israel posted on social media that it was "with you on the ground" in a message to Iranian protesters.

Posting on its Persian-language X account, the spy agency encouraged Iranians to "go out into the streets together".

Iran, which does not recognise Israel, has long accused it of conducting sabotage operations against its nuclear facilities and assassinating its scientists.

Pak Dy PM Dar to visit China

ISLAMABAD, PTI: Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar will visit China later this week to co-chair the 7th round of a bilateral strategic dialogue.

The Pakistan–China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue will take place in Beijing on January 4, according to a statement by the Foreign Office.

Dar is undertaking the visit at the invitation of China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi. "The Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue is the highest consultative mechanism between Pakistan and China, providing a structured platform to review the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation," the FO said.

Quad envoys hold rare public meeting

BEIJING, PTI: Ambassadors of the Quad nations, consisting of the US, India, Australia and Japan, held a rare publicised meeting in Beijing.

The meeting took place on Tuesday at the US Embassy in Beijing, according to a post on X with a photo by the American Ambassador to China, David Perdue.

"The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is a force for good in maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region," Perdue said in his post.

"It is a pleasure to meet with the ambassadors of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue countries in Beijing," he said.

RINGING IN 2026

Fireworks light up the midnight sky over the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House during New Year celebrations in Sydney on Wednesday. AFP

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Pope Leo XIV gestures as he arrives for a general audience in St Peter's Square at the Vatican on Wednesday. REUTERS

UN rights chief slams Israel over suspension of aid groups in Gaza

▶ The United Nations rights chief described Wednesday Israel's threat to suspend dozens of aid groups from operating in Gaza from January as "outrageous", calling on states to urgently insist Israel shift course, reports AFP from Geneva.

"Israel's suspension of numerous aid agencies from Gaza is outrageous," Volker Turk said in a statement.

"Such arbitrary suspensions make an already intolerable situation even worse for the people of Gaza," he warned.

His comment came after Israel said that 37 aid organisations will be banned from operating in Gaza starting on Thursday, unless they comply with its new guidelines requiring detailed information on Palestinian staff. Israel has singled out international medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF), alleging that it had two employees who were members of Palestinian militant groups Islamic Jihad and Hamas.

Apart from MSF, some of the 37 NGOs to be hit with the ban are Norwegian Refugee Council, World Vision International, CARE and Oxfam, according to the list given by Zwick.

Bulgaria set to join eurozone

▶ On New Year's Day, Bulgaria becomes the 21st country to join the euro currency union, furthering its integration into the European Union. But the historic milestone arrives amid political instability and scepticism among ordinary people fuelled by fears of price rises, reports AP from Sofia.

Supporters of switching to the euro from the old currency, the lev, are praising the move as one of the greatest achievements since the 1989 transition from a Soviet-style economy to democracy and free markets.

They hope it will make the country more attractive for investors and strengthen its orientation toward wealthier Western Europe.

One of the two trains involved in a head-on collision between Machu Picchu and Ollantaytambo is pictured in Pampacahua, in Peru's Cusco Department. At least one person was killed and 40 others injured in the accident, authorities said. AFP

Mali, Burkina Faso ban US citizens

▶ Mali and Burkina Faso have said they are imposing a travel ban on US citizens in response to an equivalent measure announced by the Trump administration earlier this month, reports Reuters from Bamako.

In separate statements issued by their foreign ministries late on Tuesday, the two West African countries said they were acting in the name of "reciprocity" after the White House announced on December 16 that U.S. President Donald Trump was adding them and five other countries to a list of those subject to a full travel ban.

Mali said on Tuesday that Washington's decision to add it to the travel ban list had been taken without prior consultation and that the stated rationale was not justified.

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Pulikeshinagar Division, Robertson Road, Bangalore.

No: EE/(PN)/TEND/PR/05/ 2025-26 **Date:30-12-2025**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only-Single Cover System)

Tenders on item rate basis are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Commissioner BNCC for the works mentioned below from the registered contractors of equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES or any State Government Organizations.

The Tender Document can be downloaded from the GOK KPPP Website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on payment of prescribed fee noted against each item of work (non-refundable) in the form of e-Payment through KPPP Platform. The Tenderer should accompany a copy of the valid contractor Registration and shall be submitted through KPP Portal. (Standard Tender Document KW1 & KW2).

Sl. No	Name of the Work/Est Cost (in Lakhs)/EMD in Rupees/Category.
	General Category Works 2nd Call
1	Improvements to road and drains and culvert in Karumariyamma nagara road surrounding area in ward no 31(70) Kushalnagar for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.50,000/-.**
2	Improvements to roads and drains and culverts at Anwar street Sugar mandi Modi garden in ward no 47 (72) D.J.Halli for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.50,000/-.**
	SC Category Works 2nd Call
1	Improvements to road and drain in Moore road and surrounding in ward no 31(70) Kushalnagar for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : Rs.**20.00 Lakhs**, EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**
2	Iimprovements and Amenities of old Revenue office ward office at L.R Bande in ward no 69(32)- Kavalbyrasandra for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs**, EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**
3	Improvements to roads and drains and culverts at Ramaswamy galley and surrounding area in ward no 47 (72) D.J.Halli for the year 2025-26 Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs**, EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**
4	Comprehensive development to at Prominade road 2nd cross and asphalting and cc road and surrounding area in ward no 78(75) Pulikeshinagar for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**
	ST Category Works 2nd Call
1	Improvements to roads and drains and N.P Factory cross roads in ward no 47 (72) D.J.Halli for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**
2	Comprehensive Development at MK Palya cross roads CC Road & surrounding area in ward no 78 (75) Pulikeshinagar Estimate Cost : **Rs.25.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.31,250/-.**
3	Improvements to Footpath Viviyani road, Davis Road & Richards Park & Surrounding area in ward no 60(74)Sagayapuram for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.50.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.62,500/-.**
	CAT-II(A) Category Works 2nd Call
1	Construction of new culverts in ward Shadab nagar in ward no-48(71)Muneshwaranagar for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.10.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.12,500/-.**
2	Improvements to drain and at Muneshwara temple and surrounding area in ward no-48(71)Muneshwaranagar for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.10.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.12,500/-.**
3	Improvements to drain from Periyar nagar circle to Modi road cross in ward no 61(73) S.K.Garden for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**
4	Improvements to drain and culverts at 1st and 3rd cross in Valab garden in ward no 61(73) S.K.Garden for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**
5	Improvements to asphalting roads and drains at Clever land road and surrrounding area in ward no-78(75) Pulikeshinagar for the year 2025-26. Estimate Cost : **Rs.20.00 Lakhs,** EMD **Rs.25,000/-.**

Calendar of events: (1) Tender Documents may be downloaded from KPPP portal : **09.01.2026, (2)** Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on :**19-01-2026 at 15:00 Hrs** noon in the office of the Executive Engineer, Pulikeshinagar Division, Robertson Road, Frazer Town, Bangalore-560 005. **(3)** Last Date & Time for Receipts of tenders : **30-01-2026 up to 16:00 hours. (4)** Date of Opening of Technical Bid : **31-01-2026 after 16:30 hours. (5)** Date of Opening of Financial Bid : **After Approval of Technical Bid.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Pulikeshinagar Division, Zone-1
Bengaluru North City Corporation

Government of Karnataka

Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Bagalkot

Tel Phone.: 08354- 235042 E-mail ID: bgkeezpe@yahoo.com Fax: 08354-235043

No: EE/PRED/BGK/PB-2/CMIDP/Tender/2025-26/4476 **Date:23.12.2025**

SHORT TENDER NOTIFICATION (One & Two Cover System)
(KW-1,2 &3 Bid Document)

Tender Called for the Work in the above notification through E-mode tendering is read as below. Item rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement ACT 1999 and Rules 2000 STANDARD BID DOCUMENT KW-4 through Public electronic Tendering System (E-Tender from Class-1,2,3 contractor (Civil) registered in KPWD, Who have got adequate financial resources, State of Technology, Suitable Construction equipments technical man Power & Sufficient past Experience for the following Work as per Schedule Given Below.

Tender Called for ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಯವರ ಮೂಲಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ (ಸಿ.ಎಮ್.ಐ.ಡಿ.ಪಿ) ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಯೋಜನೆ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೀಳಗಿ, ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಹಂಚಿಕೆಯಾದ ತಲಾ ರೂ.50.00 ಕೋಟಿ ಮೊತ್ತದ ಯೋಜನೆ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆಯಾದ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಬೀಳಗಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಮತಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಸೇತುವೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ.

Scheme Under Work Indent No:

ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ: 22264, 22139, 22168, 22140, 22136, 22172, 22142, 22143, 22160, 22164, 22158
ಪ್ರವರ್ಗ–2 (ಎ) ವರ್ಗದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 22134, 22169, 22138, 22165
ಪ್ರವರ್ಗ–1 ವರ್ಗದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 22170
ಪರಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಜಾತಿ ವರ್ಗದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:: 22157, 22144, 22156

ಇದ್ದು, ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ವಿವರ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮೊತ್ತ (**ರೂ20.00 ದಿಂದ 80.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ಮಿತಿಗೊಳಪಟ್ಟು**), ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅರ್ಜಿಯ ಬೆಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ ಎಲ್ಲ ವಿವರಗಳು ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದಂತೆ.

read as below.

Calendar of event

1	Request of blank Tender Documents and receipt of Completed Technical & Financial Bid through e-procurement	**Dt:29.12.2025 to 12.01.2026 at 5.30pm**
2	Opening of Technical Bid Date (ದ್ವಿ ಲಕೋಟೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಅನ್ವಯಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.)	**Dt:14.01.2026 at 11.00 am**
3	Opening of Financial Bid Date	**Technical Bid Approved.**

Note:-More details can be obtained through website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the below signed Office during the office hours. **Phone no: 08354-235042**

DIPR/Bgk/468/DeshpandePublicity/2025-26

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Bagalkote

Putin says Russia believes it will win in Ukraine in New Year address

MOSCOW, AFP

President Vladimir Putin said Russia believed it would win in Ukraine in an address Wednesday, as his country marked another New Year -- their main holiday -- at war.

The almost four-year offensive in Ukraine has come at a huge human cost, with military deaths on both sides believed to be in the tens, or even hundreds, of thousands.

Putin devoted much of his short address to "fighters and commanders" in Ukraine. He did not mention an alleged Ukrainian drone attack on one of his residences which Kyiv has denied, calling the claim an attempt to derail a stumbling US-led peace process.

During the diplomatic rush to end Europe's worst conflict since World War II in recent weeks, Putin has consistently told Russians, that the military intends to seize the rest of Ukrainian land he has proclaimed as Russian by force if talks fail.

Addressing soldiers, whom he called "heroes", Putin said: "We believe in you and our victory."

Putin's traditional speech was first aired in the far-eastern Kamchatka peninsula -- the first Russian region to enter 2026.

December 31 marks 26 years since Putin came to power.

Russia -- which now occupies around a fifth of Ukraine -- has hit its smaller neighbour with an almost daily barrage of missiles and drones that have killed thousands of Ukrainian civilians and displaced millions.

Moscow has consistently hit Ukrainian energy and other civilian infrastructure -- forcing days-long power cuts in freezing temperatures.

In Vyshgorod, a town outside Kyiv, residents left without power for several days due to Russian bombing told AFP the strikes had made their lives "hell".

US-led diplomacy to end the war has gained pace in recent weeks, with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky expected to attend a January 6 summit in France with allies.

Moscow shows proof of Kyiv drone attack

Russia's defence ministry published a video on Wednesday of a downed drone that it says Ukraine launched at President Vladimir Putin's residence in north-west Russia this week -- a claim Kyiv has denied as a "lie", reports AFP.

Centre rolls out Rs 4,531-crore scheme to support exporters

1st among 11 schemes under Export Promotion Mission

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Union Government on Wednesday announced a Rs 4,531-crore scheme, under which exporters will be provided financial support for participation in international trade fairs and exhibitions.

Under the scheme, the government will provide structured financial and institutional support for activities, including Buyer-Seller Meets (BSMs), participation in international trade fairs and exhibitions, Director General of Foreign Trade Ajay Bhadoo told reporters.

The intervention called Market Access Support (MAS) aims to improve buyer connect and enhance India's presence in global markets through outcome-oriented market access initiatives. This is among the first of 11 schemes proposed under the Rs 25,060-crore Export Promotion Mission, which was approved by the Union Cabinet on November 12, 2025.

Bhadoo said the initiative would help in diversification of India's exports in new markets and product segments. "It is structured in a way to encourage participation of first-time exporters and MSMEs," he said.

"For every trade delegation, the organiser must ensure at least 35% of the participating companies are MSMEs," Bhadoo added.

The initiative comes at a time when Indian exporters are facing huge challenges due to the imposition of a steep 50% tariff by the US, the biggest buyer of Indian goods.

"At a time when engineering exporters are facing challenges in the traditional markets, the new scheme would help in accessing new regions," EEPC India Chairman Pankaj Chadha said.

The rollout of the scheme would provide necessary financial support to the exporting community in showcasing their products in different markets. This will certainly help in pushing Brand India globally, Chadha said.

Welcoming the move, FIEO President SC Ralhan said the government has addressed a long-standing need of exporters, particularly MSMEs, who often face constraints in accessing overseas markets.

According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, a forward-looking three-to-five-year calendar of major market access events will be prepared and approved in advance, enabling exporters and organising agencies to plan participation well ahead of time and ensuring continuity of market development efforts.

A minimum participation of 35% MSMEs has been mandated for supported events, with special prioritisation being accorded to new geographies and smaller markets to encourage export diversification. Delegation size has been benchmarked at a minimum of 50 participants, with flexibility provided based on market conditions and strategic relevance.

JUST-IN-TIME MEASURE

- Market Access Support is a part of **Rs 25,060-crore** Export Promotion Mission
- **Rs 500 cr** earmarked for the current fiscal
- The scheme is spread over a **six-year** period (FY26-31)
- Exporters to get financial incentive to participate in international trade fairs, exhibitions
- Initiative to help exporters access new markets
- **35%** Of participating companies should be Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Indian economy growing at robust pace, says RBI report

Banking sector remains sound

NEW DELHI, PTI

The Indian economy is growing at a robust pace, driven by strong domestic demand, low inflation, and the healthy balance sheets of banks, said a Reserve Bank of India report released on Wednesday.

The domestic financial system remains robust and resilient, bolstered by strong balance sheets, easy financial conditions, and low financial market volatility, said the December 2025 edition of the Financial Stability Report (FSR).

"Nonetheless, there are near-term risks from external uncertainties — geopolitical and trade-related," said the report, which reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on the resilience of the Indian financial system and risks to financial stability.

It further said the health of the scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) remains sound with strong capital and liquidity buffers, improved asset quality and robust profitability.

"Macro stress test results affirm the resilience of SCBs to withstand losses under hypothetical adverse scenarios and maintain capital buffers well above the regulatory minimum. Stress tests also confirm the resilience of mutual funds and clearing corporations," it added.

According to the report, the gross NPA ratio of banks will improve further to 1.9% by March 2027 under a baseline scenario.

As of September 2025, the key ratio stood at a multi-decade low of 2.1%, the central bank said in its half-yearly Financial Stability Report. "The aggregate GNPA ratio of the 46 banks may improve from 2.1% in September 2025 to 1.9% in March 2027 under the baseline scenario," the report said.

The GNPA ratio may rise to 3.2% and 4.2% under adverse scenarios, the RBI said, pointing to results of its stress tests.

From a capital buffers perspective, the report said the capital to risk-weighted assets ratio (CRAR) remained strong as of September, with state-owned banks at 16% and private sector banks at 18.1%.

Banks will be able to withstand adverse economic shocks, the report said, listing out how the capital buffers will be impacted in adverse events.

On the economy, the report noted that the real GDP growth surprised on the upside in both Q1 2025-26 and Q2 2025-26 at 7.8% and 8.2%, respectively, supported by strong private consumption and public investment.

HIRING MOMENTUM

GCCs log over 150,000 net talent additions in 2025

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

In 2025, India's global capability centre (GCC) ecosystem reached a level of maturity, and has grown beyond mere cost arbitrage to innovation and R&D hubs. India is seen as a strategic market that can deliver both innovation and high-skilled talent.

Zinnov, a global management and strategy consulting firm, in its recent report said that about 50 new GCCs opened in India in the first two quarters of CY2025 alone. The country houses 1,700 GCCs.

According to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the GCCs' combined revenue has jumped from $40.4 billion in FY19, to $64.6 billion in FY24.

These GCCs employ over 19 lakh people across the country. With major clusters in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai, and Mumbai, the sector is projected to reach $105 billion by 2030. The ministry added that over 400 new GCCs and 1,100 units have been added in the past five years.

Fidelity International Head of Global Platform Solutions Delivery and Site Head — India Rohit Jetly said global enterprises are no longer coming to India only for scale and execution; they are coming for leadership. "Over the last several years, global firms have recognised that India can set strategy, design platforms, and deliver transformation at the scale and quality the world expects," he said.

Beyond Key HR Head Ambrish Kanungo said GCCs are a major force behind hiring momentum. As reports pointed out, GCCs and product-focused companies have become the main engines pushing IT hiring forward these days. "This shift is turning India from just a place that delivers services into a real partner for global innovation. From the HR side, it means higher demands on building deeper leadership benches, giving teams more room to make decisions, and getting better at working across cultures. Talent development is becoming as critical as talent acquisition," he said.

US-headquartered technology company Pitney Bowes has its largest GCC in India. Its VP — Data Science & Analytics and MD, India, Pankaj Sachdeva said GCCs have moved beyond execution roles to become strong drivers of innovation and value creation. Increased adoption of AI, a stronger focus on Centers of Excellence, and greater ownership of global charters at India GCCs have accelerated this shift.

GCCs are seen accelerating their recruitment of tech professionals much faster than traditional IT companies. Specialist staffing firm Xpheno Co-Founder Kamal Karanth said hiring momentum within the country's GCCs is expected to carry forward into 2026, building on the strong trends seen through 2025. "The new year begins with the advantage of close to 100 greenfield GCCs set up in 2025, who would all be actively hiring for capacity in 2026. Further, sustained hiring for expansion by several operational mid-size and large GCCs, has set the stage for a heightened talent action in 2026," he added.

Having recorded over 150,000 net talent additions in 2025, GCCs in India are now positioned to further scale their workforce by around 200,000 in 2026. This projected net growth of GCC workforce is set to be the highest over a 5-year period. Also, the current fiscal ending March 2026, would be the third in a row when the GCCs net additions would close higher than the net additions by the IT Services cohort, he added.

Rupee dips 5% in 2025 amid $ strength

MUMBAI, PTI

The rupee slumped 5% in 2025 amid persistent capital outflows from foreign investors, alongside heightened dollar demand from importers, making it one of the worst-performing Asian currencies.

On the last trading session of 2025, the rupee depreciated 13 paise to close at 89.88 against the US dollar as month-end demand and FPIs' dollar buying kept it lower.

The domestic currency has exhibited a negative bias throughout the year, making it Asia's worst-performing currency in 2025, with foreign portfolio investors pulling out $16.5 billion from equities this year, further denting investor sentiments, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 89.89 against the dollar and touched an intra-day low of 89.95 and a high of 89.84 against the American currency.

At the end of Wednesday's trading session, the rupee was quoted at 89.88 against the greenback, registering a fall of 13 paise over its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee rose 23 paise to close at 89.75 against the greenback. On a year-on-year basis, the rupee has plunged 4.95%. It was quoted at 85.64 on December 31, 2024.

Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, said, "The rupee resumed its downward trajectory following Tuesday's pause, weighed down by a rebounding US dollar against major currencies. For the year 2025, the rupee emerged as the regional laggard, with spot prices whipsawed by tightening dollar liquidity, surging trade deficit, relatively high US Tariff and capital flows."

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.10% higher at 98.33.

Bourses surge nearly 1%

MUMBAI, PTI: Equity benchmark indices jumped nearly 1% on Wednesday, the final trading session of 2025, after days of range-bound trading amid sustained buying by domestic institutional investors.

After five days of decline, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 545.52 points, or 0.64%, to settle at 85,220.60. The 50-share NSE Nifty soared 190.75 points, or 0.74%, to end at 26,129.60.

3 innovators from AP to participate in IPITEx 2026

BENGALURU, DHNS: Million Mutinies, a Bengaluru-based not-for-profit initiative, in collaboration with Rotary Bengaluru Disha, has facilitated three innovators from Andhra Pradesh to participate at the International Intellectual Property, Invention, Innovation and Technology Exposition (IPITEx) 2026, scheduled to be held in Bangkok from January 5-9, 2026.

IPITEx is one of the world's leading platforms for inventors and innovators, attracting global investors, policymakers, industry leaders, and innovation ecosystems from across continents. The participation of Indian grassroots innovators at this prestigious global forum marks a significant milestone in showcasing India's bottom-up innovation strength rooted in rural wisdom, sustainability, and frugal engineering, the company said in a statement.

Govt extends safeguard duties on imports of steel products

NEW DELHI, PTI: The government has extended safeguard duties on imports of certain steel products for three years, aiming to curb dumping from countries like China and protect domestic manufacturers from a supply glut.

Naveen Jindal

The duties, first imposed as a temporary 12% levy for 200 days in April, will now remain in force until April 2028, according to an official notification.

The safeguard duty will be levied at 12% in the first year (April 21, 2025, to April 20, 2026), reduced to 11.5% in the second year (April 21, 2026, to April 20, 2027), and further lowered to 11% in the third year (April 21, 2027, to April 20, 2028).

Analysts said the shorter duration had created uncertainty among investors, and the new three-year window offers longer-term protection for domestic players.

Reacting to the development, Indian Steel Association President Naveen Jindal said the safeguard duty is a calibrated policy measure aimed at maintaining stability in the domestic steel market, while ensuring continuity of supply for consumers and infrastructure projects.

Jindal, who is Chairman of Jindal Steel, said the diversion of surplus steel capacity into India by China, Japan, South Korea and Vietnam has implications for domestic capacity utilisation, investment planning, and employment.

The safeguard duty helps address these pressures by restoring competitive balance and supporting the domestic steel value-chain. Given global supply imbalances, further trade remedies may be considered as part of a broader policy approach to ensure sustainable growth, he noted.

Oyo-parent Prism files confidential IPO papers with Sebi

NEW DELHI, PTI: Prism, parent of travel tech unicorn Oyo, has filed preliminary papers with Sebi to raise Rs 6,650 crore through an IPO using a confidential route, sources said on Wednesday. The public offering is expected to value the company in the range of $7-8 billion, they added.

The filing follows shareholders' approval at an EGM held on December 20, where the company received consent to raise up to Rs 6,650 crore through a fresh issue of equity shares, subject to regulatory approvals and market conditions.

Prism aims to tap public markets in 2026, following a year of revenue growth and continued EBITDA positivity, said people in the know.

CapitaLand India Trust to divest 20.2% stake in 3 data centres

BENGALURU, DHNS: Property trust CapitaLand India Trust (CLINT) will divest 20.2% stake in three data centre assets under development to CapitaLand India Data Centre Fund (CIDCF) for an estimated total purchase consideration of Rs 702 crore (S$99.73 million).

The three data centres are in Navi Mumbai, Chennai and Hyderabad. Both the Chennai and Hyderabad centres are under development, while the Navi Mumbai data centre tower 2 is also under development.

In a statement, the company said the total purchase consideration of the three data centres is based on 20.2% of the total enterprise value of Rs 5,197 crore as of December 31, 2025.

It added that the enterprise value, negotiated on a willing-buyer and willing-seller basis, is at a premium to the independent valuation of Rs 4,570 crore.

India 3rd in global AI Vibrancy Index

BENGALURU, DHNS: India has jumped four places in the last year and is now ranked 3rd globally in the Stanford University's 2025 Global AI Vibrancy Index. Only the United States and China are ahead of India, said IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge.

He added that Karnataka has contributed a lot to this momentum. "Karnataka is positioning India as an AI leader, with a strong Artificial Intelligence and deep-tech target, and the state's startup policy for 2025-30 has committed to providing Rs 518 crore to support 25,000 startups," Kharge mentioned.

The global ranking is based on several parameters including R&D, talent, responsible AI policy and infrastructure. India's rise in the ranking is due to strong research output, high patenting, growing AI job market and expanding digital infrastructure. In terms of talent, India is already ranked 2nd globally.

"This reflects the strength and depth of our AI workforce and education ecosystem," Kharge said.

KARNATAKA STATE MINERALS CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Regd. Office : TTMC 'A' Block 5th Floor, BMTC Building, KH Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560027.
Phone: 080-22278813/14/15/16, Fax : 080-22213172
Website: https://ksmc.karnataka.gov.in

No. KSMCL/PROD/Tender/TIOM/D-1-Dump/2025-26/ Date: 31.12.2025

e-TENDER INVITATION

KSMCL invites short-term e-Tender for the work of Re-handling from the dump (Excavation), Crushing and Screening work at Thimmappanagudi Iron Ore Mine (TIOM), Sandur Taluk, Ballari District, Karnataka under e-tendering system through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal.

Calender of events

Tender Reference No	KSMCL/2025-26/SE0054.
Downloading documents from website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in	From 01/01/2026
Last date for receiving queries	06/01/2026 at 5.00 PM
Pre-bid meeting	08/01/2026
Last date and ti0me for uploading of e-tender in E-procurement platform on or before	12/01/2026 Upto 5:00 PM
The Technical Bid will be opened Online by the Authorized Officer on	14/01/2026 at 11:00 AM
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 5,78,000/-
Address for communication	**General Manager (P) Karnataka State Minerals Corporation Limited** TTMC, "A" Block, 5th Floor, BMTC Building, K.H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560027. Phone: 080-22278813/ 14/15/16

Sd/-
GENERAL MANAGER (P)

DIPR/CP/4761/AKAR/2025-26

VISVESVARAYA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
"Jnana Sangama", Belagavi - 590018, Karnataka

Ref.No: VTU/BGM/RE/2025-26/IFT No.116/5168 Date: 30-12-2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System) - (Through KPP Portal Only)

The e-Tender are invited in duplicate from eligible Tenderers, registered Contractor, by the Registrar, Visvesvaraya Technological University, "Jnana Sangama", Belagavi - 18, under standard tender document procedure K/W format for the work of **Interior Work to Administrative Office at 1s Floor, Admin Building (North Wing) at VTU, "Jnana Sangama", Belagavi. Amounting to Rs. 1,19,48,336/- (Excluding GST).** Other details log on to Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on 30-12-2025.**

Sd/- Registrar
VTU, Belagavi

DIPR/Belagavi/1560/Adverto/2025-26

Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
6/13/1, 10th Block, 2nd Stage, Nagarabhavi, Bengaluru-560072, Ph:080-22282220,
email: kredlmd@gmail.com, www.kredl.karnataka.gov.in
No.KREDL/CIVIL/198/2025-26/4068 Date:31.12.2025

INVITATION FOR BIDS
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement portal only)

Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Limited (KREDL) invites bids from eligible class I registered KPWD contractors for the following works: **Interior Furnishing and Workspace Setup for Fourth Floor Incubation Center at KREDL Corporate Office, Nagarbhavi, Bengaluru.** Estimated cost put to tender: **Rs. 2.00 Crores.** For further details, interested applicants may access bidding documents from e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from **02.01.2026.** Last date for submission of bids is **on 16.01.2026.**

Sd/- Deputy General Manager (Accounts), KREDL

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/5678 DATE: 29/12/2025

E-Tender Notification

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise e-Tenders from Eligible registered contractors for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 1 work under head of account 8443-Deposit contribution and 1 work under head of account 4059-PW Building. Totally 2 No. of works, amount put to tender is Rs. 60.00 Lakhs and Rs. 28.80 Lakhs respectively.

Calendar of events:1)Last date for queries & clarifications : 13-01-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 16-01-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 19-01-2026 at 4.30 PM,4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 5)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1559/KSMCA/2025-26

POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of the Director General of Police, C.I.D, Special Units and Economic Offences, Carlton House, Palace Road, Bangalore – 560 001,

No.:01/STS-1/CCD&CIDUpgradation/CID/2025-26 Dated: 31/12/2025

E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

15 days Short Term E-Tenders (Call-2) are invited in "Two Cover System" as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 1999 and rules, 2000 through e-Procurement portal of Government of Karnataka (www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in) for the supply/maintenance of below mentioned Softwares/ Components under "Upgradation of Cyber Crime Division, CID" Scheme.

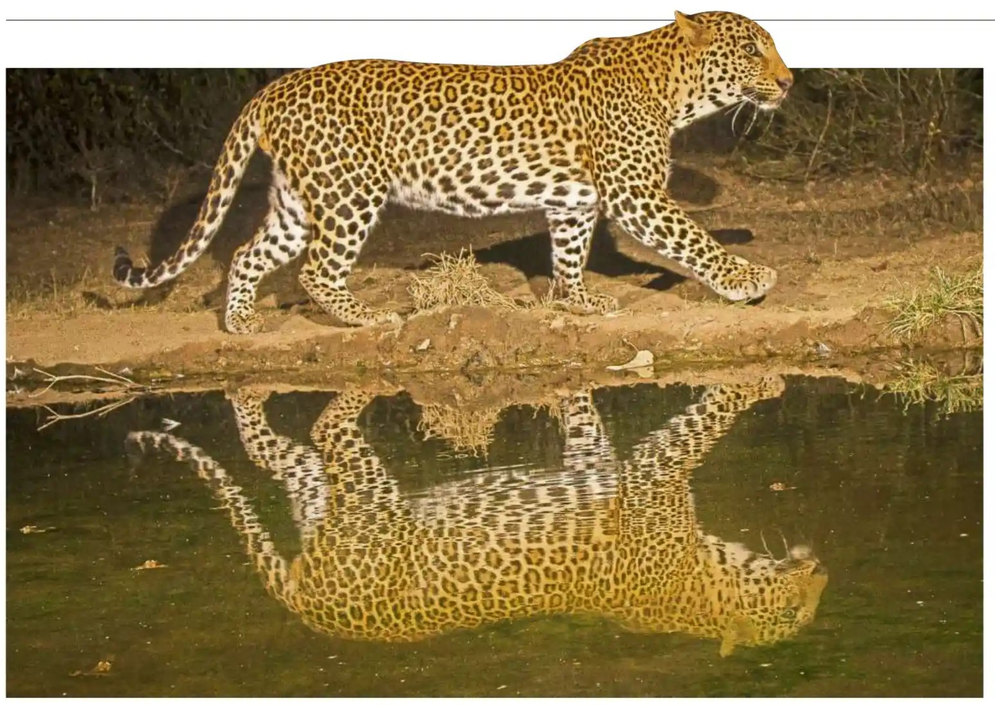
Sl. No.	Name of the Item/ Component	Qty	Approximate Cost in Rs.	Tender No.
"Upgradation of Cyber Crime Division, CID" Scheme				
1	High end Workstation	02 No's	₹ 40,00,000/-	KSP/2025-26 IND0480/**Call-2**
2	Digitization & Archiving	01 No.	₹ 80,00,000/-	KSP/2025-26 SE0085/**Call-2**

Last date for bid submission : 09.01.2026 at 17-00 Hours

In order to participate in e-Procurement platform all the intended Tenderers have to register in the e-Procurement portal. A training program in e-Procurement is organized by e-Procurement Cell. The Tenderers who participate in the e-Procurement Tender can take assistance with e-Procurement helpdesk at 080-46010000, 080-68948777. It is mandatory for Tenderers to register in e-Procurement platform. Please visit https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in for more information or call Helpline 080-46010000, 080-68948777.

For Director General of Police
CID, Special Units and
Economic Offences, Bangalore

DIPR/CP/4760/AKAR/2025-26



A leopard and spotted deers captured on a camera trap in Mysuru district. PHOTOS BY PRUTHVI B

The art and science of camera trapping

From instruments of pursuit to tools of preservation, trail cameras have transformed the way humans see and safeguard the wild, writes Pavan Kumar H

A camera trap image of a tiger in Tadoba.

Palm civet cats.

The very invention of trail cameras in the United States of America in the 1880s was for hunting. Bulky, wired cameras were placed along the probable tracks of white-tailed deer to understand the movement of what hunters then called the 'vermilion deer', largely to prevent crop raids.

More than a century later, similar technology, now far more refined, has taken on a radically different role. Unmanned trail cameras have evolved into critical tools for wildlife protection and conservation. Camera trapping of wild animals today is as much a science as it is an art, enabling experts to capture rare and elusive species in habitats where their very existence was once doubted.

While camera traps allow wildlife photographers to push the limits of creativity, they also help conservationists communicate the scale of conflict and survival challenges faced by various species.

Camera trapping is considered one of the most effective methods for studying highly elusive species in their natural habitats without disturbing them. It is through this technology that experts have recorded the presence of melanistic tigers in Simlipal, Odisha, smooth-coated otters in Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttarakhand, the Asiatic Caracal in Jaisalmer, and several other rare species. In Karnataka, the silent presence of camera traps in Kodagu revealed the secretive lives of the brown mongoose, white-tailed common civet and other mammals.

In India, researchers, forest officials and wildlife photographers primarily rely on two non-invasive camera-based technologies. The first involves trail cameras that capture comparatively low-resolution images, mainly used in surveys and scientific studies. The second is camera trapping, which employs advanced Digital Single-Lens Reflex (DSLR) cameras, multiple flash-light units and motion sensors to capture high-resolution images of animals in their natural habitat.

Pruthvi B setting up a camera trap.

"It takes months and sometimes years of trial and error to get one decent image of a target species. There is a 90% chance of failure while trying to capture an animal in its natural habitat," says Mysuru-based wildlife photographer Pruthvi B, winner of multiple international awards, including the prestigious Nature inFocus award. His award-winning image of a female leopard teaching its cub how to survive in an urban jungle was captured using a camera trap. Interestingly, almost all his photographs of tigers, leopards, deer, and other wildlife were taken outside protected areas, in and around Mysuru.

Setting up a camera trap to produce an artistic image is a science in itself. The equipment—cameras, flashes, and sensors—must blend seamlessly with the surroundings to avoid disturbing the animals. The artificial light should be subtle, never harsh enough to spook the subject.

"Camera trapping is one of the most expensive and difficult forms of wildlife photography," Pruthvi explains. "The number of variables beyond our control is far greater than during a jungle safari. The camera must trigger the shutter instantly when the sensor detects movement. Artificial light sources must flash simultaneously, and, most importantly, the animal must be within the focal area. And all this has to happen in our complete absence."

According to him, such precision is possible only with deep knowledge of the target species, which often comes from years of observation, trial and learning. "For a good image, animals must gradually get accustomed to the cameras and understand that the flashing lights pose no threat," he adds.

Experts say elephants are among the hardest animals to capture on camera traps, as they often end up damaging the equipment.

During a jungle safari, one might spot 10 to 15 species of animals. But the real treasures of the forest reveal themselves in the pitch of darkness. Camera traps have proved invaluable in documenting these lesser-known and elusive species.

A detailed pre-installation study of the habitat and animal movement is crucial, says Yashpal Rathore, a Rajasthan-based camera-trapping expert credited with documenting the presence of black tigers in Simlipal for the first time. He has also worked extensively in Bhadra Tiger Reserve, Sandur valley, Kodagu, and other parts of Karnataka, capturing animal-habitat interaction involving species such as tiger, elephant, palm civet cat, porcupine and others.

"Camera traps give us insights into elusive species that are difficult to study through conventional fieldwork. They allow us to monitor wildlife without disturbing them, reducing the risk of behavioural changes and leaving minimal footprints in protected habitats," he says.

For better conservation strategies

According to Yashpal, camera traps generate high-quality data on animal behaviour, habitat use, population dynamics, feeding patterns, social interactions and predator-prey relationships. "With the data collected, we can design effective conservation strategies to protect endangered species and fragile ecosystems," he adds.

For the forest departments across the country, trail cameras have become indispensable—not only for wildlife surveys, including nationwide tiger estimation exercises, but also as invisible eyes guarding protected areas. There have been numerous instances in which officials have traced and arrested poachers using images captured by these cameras.

In Karnataka, the forest department is using camera traps to trace the movement of mammals. Recently, the department was able to scientifically track the movement of a male subadult tiger from Nagarahole to Karwar, using camera traps and without human intervention.

They usually place a camera trap near water bodies in summer to study species density, behaviour, and other characteristics.

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to: spectrum@deccanherald.co.in

When life crushed, she chose gratitude

Nemichandra chronicles the extraordinary journey of Margaret Newnes, who found faith and purpose even amid profound loss

The year was 1999. I read *Crushed for Fragrance*, a real-life story by Margaret Newnes. Her autograph read 'May you be blessed as you read what Jesus has done in my life'. The memory of reaching out to her at her home in Richards Town, Bengaluru, is now a blur, but the book's impact has never faded.

The book taught me an important lesson — to live a life of gratitude even when faced with extreme adversity; to be grateful for all that one has, even if it is just a meagre meal on the table. That was all the 26-year-old Margaret had when she was left to raise three young children after her husband, an Air Force pilot, never returned from a dangerous sortie.

Margaret was born in 1937 at the British Army hospital quarters at Kamptee, Nagpur, as the third child of Dr Leggett and Marjorie. A few years later, the family moved to Bombay when World War II was underway. Soon, four-year-old Margaret and her siblings, June and Noel, were sent to a boarding school in Yercaud.

Ill health brought June to Bengaluru, where her aunts lived. Margaret joined her at Good Shepherd Convent, unaware then that the city would one day become her permanent home. She later passed the Senior Cambridge examination and took up a teacher-training course at the Convent of Jesus and Mary in Mumbai. When the training ended in 1956, Margaret wanted to be a nun. Her mother, however, insisted she spend six months teaching.

She was offered a job at the school attached to the National Defence Academy at Khadakwasla, near Pune. In January 1957, she met Percy, an Air Force pilot, 'lovable and so full of humour'. The knight in shining armour swept her off her feet, and they were married the following year.

Their first child, Cheryl, was born in 1959, followed by Robin William in 1961. As they awaited the arrival of their third child, Patricia, war was declared with China. In January 1963, Percy left for Russia to train on the AN-12 Russian transport aircraft.

After six months, Percy returned and was posted in Chandigarh. Reunited at last, the young family moved into a beautiful modern home.

Percy's squadron flew daily sorties carrying supplies over Ladakh, dropping them to troops stationed in the valleys below. Flying between treacherous mountain ranges demanded absolute precision and care.

On July 16, 1963, Percy completed a routine sortie over Ladakh and was allowed home early, as he was scheduled for night flying later. That evening, as he prepared to leave, their goodbyes lingered longer than usual.

At 9.43 pm, Margaret heard the drone of the AN-12 and waited for Percy to return home at any moment. At 2.30 am, the news arrived — there had been an accident. All six on board, including Percy, were burnt beyond recognition.

Margaret Newnes with husband Percy on their wedding day in 1958. PHOTO COURTESY: AUTHOR

From loss to light

Margaret chose to face life on her own with her children. She moved to Pune and took up a teaching job at St Mary's School. After a spacious officer's residence in Chandigarh, she had to move to a temporary accommodation with two modest rooms, provided on compassionate grounds. She learnt to drive, found joy in teaching, and, with tenacity, began charting a life without Percy.

By 1967, she had built her own house in St Patrick's Town and moved there. In January 1970, she started a nursery school at home, aptly named 'Happy Hours'. There were always bills to be paid and a house loan to be cleared, but as she says later, "I did not murmur or grumble, just prayed for strength to carry my load day by day."

Her children eventually grew into compassionate individuals. In 1984, Margaret suffered a spinal injury and underwent two major surgeries. Recovery was slow, but she healed and walked again. She then moved permanently to Bengaluru, where her two daughters had settled.

It was here that she brought out her book, *Crushed for Fragrance*, becoming her own publisher and sharing her story with the world.

Recently, as I wished her a joyful Christmas season, she invited me to her home. I look forward to meeting the radiant Margaret, now 88, a woman who truly found fragrance in the crushing of life.

Margaret Newnes

A festival of wood apples at Godachi

Every Hosthilu Hunnime, Godachi comes alive with devotees, traders and heaps of sweet-sour bel fruits in a festival that clubs health and tradition, write Ganadhalu Srikanta and Channappa Madar

On the full moon day of *Marghashira Maasa* (usually in December), celebrated as *Hostilu Hunnime* in North Karnataka, the premises of the Veerabhadreshwara Temple at Godachi, near Ramdurg in Belagavi district, come alive with piles of *bel* fruit, locally known as *baluvala hannu*. Devotees queue up to take the fruit home as *prasada*, continuing a tradition practised for generations.

The five-day festival draws devotees from Belagavi, Bagalkot, Vijayapura, Haveri, Koppal and surrounding districts.

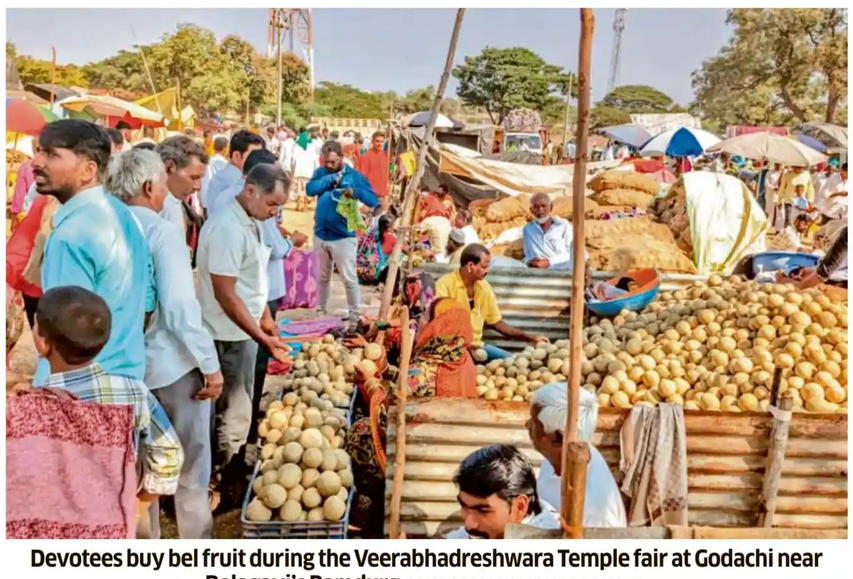
Known by a variety of regional names — *byala*, *bela*, *belavatthe*, *belavala*, *baluvala*, *baluvol*, *bolo* , *bollolli*, *dantashata* and *kapitta* — the fruit is botanically identified as *Limonia acidissima* and commonly called wood apple. In and around Ramdurg, it is referred to as *baluvala*. During the festival, devotees buy the fruit from vendors to take home as prasada, making it central to the identity of the fair.

"Only when pilgrims buy the *baluvala* fruit does the festival feel complete. That is why the Godachi Veerabhadra fair is popularly called the *Baluvala Hannina Jatre*," says Eeranna Kamannavar, a devotee.

Loads of *bel* fruit arrive at Godachi on the first day of the fair. This year, more than 15 lorries reached the village on the first day. The gram panchayat and the festival committee allocate space for vendors, who set up open stalls and begin selling immediately. Along with *bel* fruit, traders also sell *baare* (Indian jujube) and bananas, though it is the *baluvala* that draws the most attention.

"Every family buys at least five fruits, and some take home an entire bag," says Dyamanna Nagappa Amaragol, a trader who has been selling the fruit at the fair for decades. "Sharing the fruit with relatives and neighbours is also part of the culture."

The fruit taken home is consumed in many ways. Basavva Totagatti from Chandargi village describes a common method: "The pulp of the *bel* fruit is mixed with jaggery and kept for a day. The taste that develops is what many people look forward to."



Devotees buy bel fruit during the Veerabhadreshwara Temple fair at Godachi near Belagavi's Ramdurg. PHOTOS BY CHANNAPPA MADAR

More than 50 traders sell *bel* fruit during the fair. Since the fruit is not widely cultivated in the Belagavi region, it is sourced from Haveri, Shiggaon, Hanagal, Gondhi and Anavatti.

Traders say that while the fair runs through the month, sales peak between the full moon and the new moon, after which stocks deplete.

Local legend links the tradition of offering *bel* fruit to Madivala Machayya Sharanaru, a 12th-century reformer.

"According to belief, during a visit to the region, he noticed the prevalence of illness and advised people to consume the *bel* fruit, known for its medicinal value. To ensure that people took it regularly, he distributed the fruit as *prasada*. Over time, the practice became part of the temple's tradition," says Kiran Kumar, professor at the University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot, who was told about the fair's background by a veteran resident of Godachi.

Kiran Kumar has studied *bel* fruit for over two decades. It was during a visit to Godachi in 2015 that he learned about the festival's background from villagers. "There are no written records of when or how the fair began," he says, "but the continuity of the practice itself is significant."

That continuity is evident among traders like Dyamanna Amaragol. "My father sold *bel* fruits at the fair, and my grandfather did the same. I am carrying forward the tradition into the third generation," he says.

Packed with nutrition

Bel fruit has a distinctive sweet-sour taste and is rich in vitamin C, potassium, iron, minerals and antioxidants. Long valued for its medicinal properties, it is often called a healing fruit. Through the fair at Godachi, *bel* fruit reaches households across North Karnataka as temple *prasada*, where faith, food and community tradition come together each year.

(Translated from Kannada by Divyashri Mudakavi)

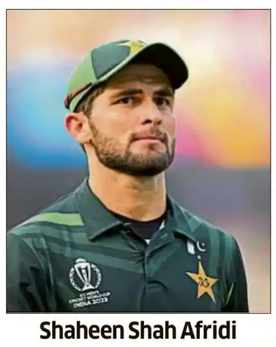
Injured Afridi doubtful for T20 World Cup

KARACHI, PTI: Experienced Pakistan left-arm pace bowler, Shaheen Shah Afridi will return home from Australia later on Wednesday with doubts over his availability for the T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka early next year.

Shaheen has been called by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for treatment and rehabilitation at the High Performance Centre in Lahore after he sustained a knee injury while fielding for Brisbane Heat in the Big Bash League (BBL).

Shaheen, who has struggled in his maiden appearance in the BBL, had spent a long time out from cricket in 2021-22 after undergoing a knee surgery following an injury while fielding in a Test in Sri Lanka.

A PCB official said that Shaheen had been called back after discussions with Cricket Australia (CA) as the initial feedback was that he required complete rest and time to recover from the injury.



Shaheen Shah Afridi

Naveen, Naib return for T20 World Cup

KABUL, PTI: Afghanistan on Wednesday recalled pacer Naveen-ul-Haq and all-rounder Gulbadin Naib in a 15-member squad for the T20 World Cup to be held across India and Sri Lanka from February 7.

Star spinner Rashid Khan will continue to lead the side, with Ibrahim Zadran named as his deputy.

Afg squad: Rashid Khan (capt), Ibrahim Zadran (VC), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (WK), Mohammad Ishaq (WK), Sediqullah Atal, Darwish Rasooli, Shahidullah Kamal, Azmatullah Omarzai, Gulbadin Naib, Mohammad Nabi, Noor Ahmad, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Naveen Ul Haq, Fazal Haq Farooqi and Abdullah Ahmadzai.
Reserves: AM Ghazanfar, Ijaz Ahmadzai and Zia Ur Rahman Sharifi.

CRICKET VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY

Karnataka extend unbeaten run

Openers Agarwal, Padikkal smash hundreds in 67-run victory

BENGALURU/ AHMEDABAD, DHNS/ PTI

Karnataka skipper Mayank Agarwal scored his 19th List A hundred while India international Devdutt Padikkal continued his prolific run of form with a third ton in four games as Karnataka extended their unbeaten streak by registering a fourth consecutive victory over Puducherry in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy. Karnataka scored a 67-run victory at the ADSA Railways Ground in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

Having bowled first in all three preceding matches, the bowlers were up for a challenge to defend 364 and ensured there was no contest, even though Puducherry looked to push for an unlikely chase at 108 for one in the 20th over of the second innings.

Hubli Tigers' Manvanth Kumar (3/52) starred with the ball and was well supported by right-arm quick Vidwath Kaverappa (2/30) and Karun Nair (2/38) as Puducherry were bundled out for 296 in 50 overs.

Earlier in the day, Agarwal (132, 124b; 15x4s, 2x6s) and Padikkal (113, 116b; 10x4s, 4x6s) struck fluent centuries and stitched a 228-run stand in 37.5 overs to lay a perfect platform as Karnataka made 363 for the loss of four wickets in 50 overs after opting to bat.

Apart from the duo, tournament centurion Karun (62, 34b, 4x4, 4x6) inflicted more damage while young batting sensation Smaran R (21, 17b, 2x4) and Abhinav Manohar (21 n.o., 6b, 2x4, 2x6) added to the onslaught.

Karnataka are now second in Group A with 16 points while Madhya Pradesh top the group with a better Net Run Rate.

Mayank Agarwal (left) and Devdutt Padikkal scored brilliant hundreds in Karnataka's 67-run win over Puducherry in Ahmedabad on Wednesday. DH FILE PHOTO/X

Electing to bowl, Iyer dazzled with the ball and was given able support by Kumar Kartikeya (2/56) to restrict Tripura to 286 for 7.

For Tripura, Vijay Shankar made 91 off 98 balls with the help of four boundaries, while Sridam Paul scored 52.

Jharkhand win

Opener Utkarsh Singh hit a fluent unbeaten 123 off 120 balls while right-arm fast bowler Shubham Kumar Singh scalped 4 for 53 to hand Jharkhand a commanding nine wicket win over Tamil Nadu and jump to the third position in the points table.

Jharkhand restricted Tamil Nadu to 243 all out in 45 overs.

Sarfaraz soars high

Sarfaraz Khan scored a brilliant 75-ball 157, studded with 14 sixes as Mumbai inched closer towards knockout with a 87-run victory over Goa.

This is Mumbai's fourth successive win in the group league stage and one more win out of the remaining three games will almost ensure a smooth passage into the quarterfinals. On a day when Yashasvi Jaiswal (46) made his comeback after being laid low by gastritis during the opening week of the National One Day Championship, Sarfaraz owned the stage at the Jaipuria Vidyalaya ground where he made a mincemeat of the Goa attack with nine fours and 14 sixes.

Brief scores: Group A: Karnataka: 363/4 in 50 overs (Mayank Agarwal 132, Devdutt Padikkal 113, Karun Nair 62 n.o.) bt Puducherry: 296 all out in 50 overs (Neyan Kangayan 68, Ajay Rohera 32, MR Kale 32, Aman Khan 34, Vikneshwaran Marimuthu 31, JJ Yadav 54, Sidak Singh 27; Vidwath Kaverappa 2-30, Manvanth Kumar L 3-52; Karun Nair 2-38).
Tamil Nadu: 243 all out in 45 overs (Athish SR 33, Pradosh Ranjan Paul 49, Baba Indrajith 48, Mohamed Ali 26, Sonu Yadav 31; Shubham Kumar Singh 4-53, Sushant Mishra 2-51) lt to Jharkhand: 244/1 in 41 overs (Shikhar Mohan 90, Utkarsh Singh 123 n.o.).
Tripura: 286/7 in 50 overs (Tejasvi Jaiswal 25, Sridam Paul 52, Vijay Shankar 91, Rajat Dey 36, Swapnil Singh 30 n.o.; Venkatesh Iyer 4-44, Kumar Kartikeya 2-56) lt to Madhya Pradesh: 287/6 in 50 overs (Yash Dubey 105, Harsh Gawli 30, Shubham Sharma 71, Tripuresh Singh 34; Vijay Shankar 3-49).
Rajasthan: 343/7 in 50 overs (Aditya Rathore 25, Karan Lamba 119 n.o., Deepak Hooda 86; Sharafuddeen 3-55) lt to Kerala: 348/8 in 50 overs (Krishna Prasad 53, Baba Aparajith 126, Vishnu Vinod 28, Mohammed Azharuddeen 28; Aniket Choudhary 4-67, Manav Suthar 2-45).

Pant fails to fire as Delhi go down to Odisha by 79 runs

BENGALURU, DHNS: Rishabh Pant's **(in pic)** inconsistentsy coupled with a top-order batting malfunction saw Delhi go down to Odisha by 79 runs in their fourth Vijay Hazare Trophy Elite Group D fixture at the Alur Grounds here on Wednesday.

While Pant scored just 24 runs, lower-order contributions from Harsh Tyagi (43) and Hrithik Shokeen (32) went in vain as Delhi managed to put just 193 runs in 43.3 overs in pursuit of a 273-run target.

Odisha now are on top of Group D with 12 points and a healthy net run rate (NRR), while Delhi, despite being on the same number of points, slipped to fourth, with even Railways and Haryana getting ahead of them on better Net Run Rate.

It was also the first time so far this season that Delhi could not cross 200, something which looked so easy when Virat Kohli slammed a century against Andhra in the opener, and opener Priyansh Arya scored a fine 78 in the previous game against Saurashtra.

Pant, following scores of 5, 70, 22 could only manage 24 off 28 balls before he was dismissed by pacer Debabrata Pradhan (3/28), who along with Sambit Baral (3/34), hastened Delhi's collapse.

Odisha's total was built around veteran skipper Biplab Samantray, who scored a 74-ball-72 after they lost three wickets before their scored crossed the 100 mark.

Brief scores: Odisha: 272/8 in 50 overs (Om T Munde 26, Swastik Samal 28, Govinda Poddar 35, Biplab Samantray 72; Hrithik Shokeen 4-27) bt Delhi: 193 all out in 42.3 overs (Ayush Doseja 28, Harsh Tyagi 43, Hrithik Shokeen 32, Divij Mehra 27; Rajesh Mohanty 2-42, Debabrata Pradhan 3-28, Sambit Baral 3-34).

Aus legend Martyn in induced coma

The 54-year-old has been diagnosed with meningitis

SYDNEY, AGENCIES

Former Australian Test batsman Damien Martyn has been rushed to hospital in an induced coma after being diagnosed with meningitis, media reports said Wednesday.

The 54-year-old, who played 67 Tests between 1992 and 2006 and 208 one-day internationals, was admitted on Boxing Day last week after falling ill while lying down.

Australian media said he was being treated for meningitis, which can be deadly.

Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord.

"He is getting the best of treatment," Test great and close friend Adam Gilchrist told The Australian newspaper.

"Amanda (his partner) and his family know that a lot of people are sending their prayers and best wishes."

Former Australian coach Darren Lehmann, a longtime teammate of Martyn's, also sent support.

"Lots of love and prayers... keep strong and fighting, legend. Love to the family," he wrote on X.

Known as one of the game's great strokemakers, Martyn became a key figure in Steve Waugh's all-powerful Australian side, hitting 13 centuries and averaging 46.37.

He was also part of the Australia team that won the 2003 ODI World Cup, cracking 88 not-out in the final against India in a match-winning partnership with Ricky Ponting.

He retired in 2006 during the Ashes series and has kept a low-profile since.

Cricket Australia chief executive Todd Greenberg wished Martyn a quick recovery.

"I'm saddened to hear of Damien's illness. The best wishes of everyone at CA and in the wider cricket community are with him at this time," said Greenberg.

Martyn's seemingly effortless stroke play was his strength, averaging 46.37 with the bat in test matches.

Damien Martyn

Karnataka shown the door

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka have been knocked out of the Vijay Merchant Trophy group stages as Andhra eclipsed them to the second and remaining spot with a comfortable victory over already-ousted Uttarakhand on the Elite Group D table on Wednesday.

Despite their dominant victory against Goa at the RDCA Ground in Raipur a day before, Karnataka held their breath in second place with 19 points awaiting the outcome of the Andhra-Uttarakhand match. Andhra, however, gained six points from their win to gallop Karnataka by a point to the second spot.

Karnataka's innings triumph against Goa marked their sole victory in the group stages as they drew all four of their matches before with a first innings lead from each proving not enough.

All five group winners and the best second-placed teams have qualified for the quarterfinals while the remaining four group runners-up will square off in the pre-quarterfinals.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:08192–264056 ಇ–ಮೇಲ್:ddwcddvg01@gmail.com
ಸಂ:DD WCD Poshan CS Kit–2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:31.12.2025
ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಸಕ್ಷಮ ಅಂಗನವಾಡಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪೋಷಣ್ 2.0 ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ 2024–25ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವಂತ ಅಂಗನವಾಡಿ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಸಕ್ಷಮ ಅಂಗನವಾಡಿಗಳನ್ನಾಗಿ ಉನ್ನತೀಕರಿಸುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಶುದ್ಧ ಶೇಖರಣಾ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯದಡಿ (Clean Storage Facility) ಘಟಕ ವೆಚ್ಚ ರೂ. 10.000/–ದಂತೆ 634 ಸಕ್ಷಮ ಅಂಗನವಾಡಿ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನವೀಕರಣಗೊಳಿಸಲಾದ ಅನುದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.63.40 ಲಕ್ಷ, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.1.26.800 ಗಳಿದ್ದು, Clean Storage Kit ಗಳನ್ನು ಖರೀದಿಸಲು ಅರ್ಹ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ದಾರರಿಂದ ಎರಡು ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.
1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿ: 14–01–2026
2) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿ: 17–01–2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ: 11:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
3) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿ: 20–01–2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ: 11:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು. ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:08192–264056.
DIPR/MCA/KSMCA/599/2025-26 ಸಹಿ/– ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ. ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.

BENGALURU-MYSURU INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDOR AREA PLANNING AUTHORITY
No. 5, Second Floor, Looplane, Race Course Road, Bengaluru - 560009.
Phone: 080-22341230/35 E-mail: bmicapa@gmail.com
No:BMICAPA/CLU-02/77/2025-26/2228 Date: 31-12-2025
PUBLIC NOTICE
(UNDER SEC 14(A) OF KTCP ACT, 1961)
Sri T. Sampangi, Secretary, Shri Sharada Education Trust® has applied to this Authority seeking Change of land use from **"Agriculture"** Zone to **"Residential"** purpose pertaining to Sy.No: **425/1** extent of 0 Acre - 14½ Guntas (Including 0 Acre - 01 Guntas 'A' Kharab), Sy.No: **425/5** extent of 0 Acre - 13 Guntas and Sy.No: **425/6** extent of 0 Acre - 13 Guntas totally measuring 01 Acre - 0½ Guntas of **Malur Village**, Malur Hobli, Channapatna Taluk, Bengaluru South District under Sec 14(A) of KTCP Act 1961. The foresaid lands are reserved for **Agriculture Zone** in Approved Master Plan. Applicant has stated that the change of land use sought is in the interest of public by quoting the following:
1) By developing the Layout in the above said land, the Poor and Middle Class People will get the sites for reasonable Price.
2) During the development works of the Layout there will be opportunity of employment for Local Labourers.
3) Surrounding areas will be developed by developing the Layout in the above said Lands.
4) By planned Layout, the public are benefited with the civic amenities such as good Roads, UGD, Electrical facilities and Parks etc.
Objections, if any, are invited from the public, any person may file his / her objection to **Member Secretary, BMICAPA, Bengaluru** in writing to the above address mentioned in this publication within 15 days from this notice. Any objections received after stipulated time will not be considered.
Sd/- Member Secretary, B.M.I.C.A.P.A., Bengaluru.
DIPR/CP/4762/Adverto/2025-26

POWER COMPANY OF KARNATAKA LIMITED
(Government of Karnataka undertaking) (CIN: U40101KA2007SGC043640)
4th Floor, INDHANA BHAVANA, Race Course Road
Bengaluru - 560009.
No. PCKL/Legal Cell/2025-26/5649 DATE: 24.12.2025
NOTIFICATION
Notification for engagement of a Legal Consultant on Contract Basis
Power Company of Karnataka Limited (PCKL), a Government of Karnataka undertaking, 4th Floor, Indhana Bhavana, Race Course Cross road, Bengaluru-560009, invites application from eligible candidates for the engagement of a **Legal consultant on Contract basis to PCKL.**
- **Qualification :** Bachelor's Degree in Law (LLB).
- **Age limit:** The Maximum age shall not exceed 45 years.
- **Experience:** Min. 5 years of experience in regulatory affairs.

How to Apply : Interested candidates may apply by downloading the application from PCKL website **www.pckl.karnataka.gov.in from 01.01.2026 onwards.** For detailed information, please visit the PCKL website.
Last date for submission of Applications: 21.01.2026
For further details contact, **Deputy Director (Legal), 4th Floor, Indhana Bhavana, Racecourse Cross road, Bengaluru-560009. Contact: 8277895893 Email: addl.director2018@gmail.com**
Sd/-
Additional Director (Projects)
PCKL, Bengaluru

ಜಿಗಣಿ ಪುರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ
ಜಿಗಣಿ ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಆನೇಕಲ್ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು,
ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ನಗರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ–560105. ದೂ: 080–27825780/29760400
E-Mail: itstaff_ulb_jigani@yahoo.com
ಸಂ:ಜಿ.ಪು.ಕಾ/ಆ.ಶಾ/ಸಿ.ಆರ್/23/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 31.12.2025
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
(ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ)
ಜಿಗಣಿ ಪುರಸಭಾ ವತಿಯಿಂದ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ 1999 & 2000 ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪುರಸಭಾ ನಿಧಿಯಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇರೆಗೆ ಮಾನವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು ವಾರ್ಷಿಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಪುರಸಭಾ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಬೀದಿ ನಾಯಿಗಳ ಸಂತಾನಹರಣ ಶಸ್ತ್ರಚಿಕಿತ್ಸೆ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ವಿವರಗಳಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ.	ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ	ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ. ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)
	2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪುರಸಭಾ ನಿಧಿ	
1	Indent No- DMA/2025-26/SE6793	**98.55**
2	Indent No- DMA/2025-26/SE6795	**7.65**

ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 16.01.2026ರ 16:30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ.** ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 17.01.2026ರ 17.00 ಘಂಟೆಗೆ.** ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕವಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಇಚ್ಛೆಯುಳ್ಳ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು /ಸರಬರಾಜುದಾರರು ಕೆಪಿಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಶಾಖೆಯಿಂದ ಮತ್ತು ಕಛೇರಿ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ **http://www.jiganitown.mrc.gov.in** ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.
ಸಹಿ/–
ಮುಖ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು
ಪುರಸಭೆ, ಜಿಗಣಿ
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಾಪ್ರ/ಜಿಎ/4742/2025–26

ಪುರಸಭೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹೆಚ್.ಡಿ.ಕೋಟೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ
Email ID: itstaff ulb hdkote@yahoo.com
Phone(O)/Fax: 08228-255327
ನಂ:ಪು.ಕಾ.ಹೆ.ಕೋ/ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಶಾಖೆ/ಸಿ.ಆರ್07/2025–26 ದಿ: 29.12.2025
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
ಹೆಚ್.ಡಿ.ಕೋಟೆ ಪುರಸಭಾ ಅನುದಾನದಡಿ ನಿಯಮಗಳ ಅನ್ವಯ, 15ನೇ ಹಣಕಾಸು, ಎಸ್.ಎಫ್.ಸಿ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲು ಹಾಗೂ ಪುರಸಭಾ ನಿಧಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಲು ಅರ್ಹ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಂದ ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ.ಯು–1 ನಿಯಮಗಳನ್ವಯ ಮತ್ತು 1999 ಹಾಗೂ 2000ರ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕ ಕಾಯ್ದೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯವರು/ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಷರತ್ತು ಹಾಗೂ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜನ್ನು ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದು. **1)** ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕಡೆಯ ದಿ: 14.01.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ. **2)** ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿ: 16.01.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ಮುಂದೆ ಸೂಚಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕದಂದು ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ.	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ	ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ. ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)
1.	DMA/2025-26/SE6936	5.11	12,775.00
2.	DMA/2025-26/IND5802	32.85	67,500.00
3.	DMA/2025-26/SE6140/call-2	9.58	24,000.00
4.	DMA/2025-26/SE6133/call-2	53.28	90,300.00

ಸೂಚನೆ: ಕಾರಣಾಂತರಗಳಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಇತರೆ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು.
ಸಹಿ/– ಮುಖ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಪುರಸಭೆ, ಹೆಚ್.ಡಿ.ಕೋಟೆ
DIPR/DDMYS/1445/KSMCA/821/2025-26

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-3, 1st Floor, BBMP Building,
Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560052.
No. DGM-3/BSWML/Tend/19/2025-26 Date: 31.12.2025
INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) (Through GOK KPPP only)
The Deputy General Manager-3, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites tender from eligible tenderers for the services mentioned in the table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for services through KPP portal of the Government of Karnataka **(viz. https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).**

Name of the Work	Estimate amount of works (Rs. In Lakhs)	Duration	EMD Amount in Rs.
Segregalion & loading of LVP/RDF to tippers at MSW processing plants.	78.78	05 Months	1,57,560.00

Calendar of Events:
(1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries: **05.01.2026 upto 15.00 Hrs. in KPP Portal.**
(2) Pre bid meeting: **05.01.2026 at 15.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthnagar, Bangalore.
(3) Last date for submission of the bids: **12.01.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs.**
(4) Date of opening of Technical bid on : **13.01.2026 at 16.30 Hrs.**
(5) Date of opening of Financial bids to be notified to technically qualified bidders.
Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML.
DIPR/CP/4736/Shirdi Sai/2025-26

Govt of Karnataka
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD DIVISION KALABURAGI
No: EE/PWD/Klb/Div/TS-2/TN/2025-26/6440 Dated: 30.12.2025
:: SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION ::
1) Name of Work: Executive Engineer PWD Division Kalaburagi Invites tender of (KW1, KW2, KW3 and KW4) works under 2059-2216 Maintenance, 3054 maintenance and 3054 Bridge Repairs funds works of Indent No- General: 28246, 28248, 29309, 29310, 29311, 29307, 29308, 29352, 29293, 29262, 29294, 29133, 29286, 29303, 29931, 30015, 27843, 27896, 30312, 29848, 29850 Service Tenders: 0690, 0691, 0684, 0683, 0689, 0693, 0688, 0687, 0694, 0695, Work Reserved for SC Category-30688, Work Reserved for ST Category-29312, 29306, 28323, Work Reserved for CAT-IIA- 29353, 30025, 30686 and Work Reserved for CAT-I- 29305 in KPPP portal. 2) Estimated Cost: **Estimate cost Rs. 5.18 Lakhs Max 178.00 Lakhs,** 3) Eligibility of Contractor: PWD, Civil and Electrical Contractor License Class-IV and above, 4) Tender fees and EMD details: Min Rs. 9000.00 Max Rs. 2,26,000.00, 5) Pre Bid Meeting: **07/01/2026 upto 11.00 Hrs**, 6) Last date for queries: **08/01/2026 upto 17.30 Hrs.** 7) Last date for submission of tender: **09/01/2026 upto 16.00 Hrs**, 8) Date of opening of Technical Bid: **12/01/2026 at 16:30 Hrs**, 9) Date of opening of Financial Bid: **13/01/2026 at 16:30 Hrs**, 10) Enquiries: Office of the Executive Engineer PWD Division Kalaburagi, 11) website : **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**, 12) Bidders Should Note That : **Note:** 1) Undersigned reserves the right to Cancel/ Postpone/Recall/Reject any or all the tenders at any point of time during tender process without assigning any reason. 2) Changes in the tender process, Cancel/ Postpone/Recall/ Rejection of tender will not be Published in the News Papers Bidders may get Details of Changes In KPPP Portal Only.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division Kalaburagi
DIPR/Kalaburagi/907/KSMC&A/2025-26

IN BRIEF

Prajwal given B'luru Open wild card

▸ Mysuru's Prajwal Dev has been handed a wild card for the 10th edition of the Bengaluru Open to be played at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium between January 5 and 11, reports DHNS.

Prajwal has been in fine form of late and clinched the men's singles title at the ITF World Tennis Tour M15 event in Bhubaneswar last month.

KSCA trials for women's teams

▸ The Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) will be conducting open selection trials to pick teams to participate in the selection matches (Senior women's one-dayers) at the KSCA B ground on January 4 from 9:00 am onwards, reports DHNS.

Interested girls are requested to report by 8:00 am in cricketing attire with a xerox copy copy of their birth certificate.

Girls below the age of 16 years will not be permitted to attend the trials.

Jokic out for four weeks

▸ Denver Nuggets star Nikola Jokic faces at least four weeks on the sidelines after suffering a left knee injury in a defeat to Miami, the Nuggets confirmed on Tuesday, reports AFP from Los Angeles.

Three-time NBA Most Valuable Player Jokic collapsed to the court after a collision with team-mate Spencer Jones just before half-time in Monday's game in Miami.

Rape charges dropped

▸ An Argentine court on Tuesday dismissed charges against four footballers accused of sexually abusing a journalist while they played for premier division club Velez Sarsfield last year, reports AFP from Buenos Aires.

All four had been suspended from the Buenos Aires-based team after the claim.

The case arose after a 24-year-old sports journalist alleged she was raped after being invited by Uruguay international Sebastian Sosa to a hotel room in Tucuman, Argentina in March last year.

Aman, Yui top base price list for PWL auction

NEW DELHI, PTI: Paris Olympics bronze medallist Aman Sehrawat has entered the Pro Wrestling League (PWL) auction as the costliest domestic name on the list with a base price of Rs 18 lakh, while two-time Olympic medallist Yui Susaki and formidable Yusneylis Guzman Lopez have also placed themselves in the same bracket.

The PWL auction is scheduled for January 3 while the League will be held from Jan 15 to Feb1.

World and Commonwealth Games medallist Deepak Punia has been listed at Rs 10 lakh.

The six franchises in the upcoming season are Haryana Thunders, Tigers of Mumbai Dangals, Punjab Royals, Maharashtra Kesari, Delhi Dangal Warriors, and UP Dominators.

◆ ON TV ◆

FOOTBALL

EPL: Liverpool vs Leeds United, Crystal Palace vs Fulham **(both 11 pm)**, Sunderland vs Man City, Brentford vs Tottenham **(1:30 am, Friday)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

HOCKEY

HIL: SG Pipers vs Shrachi Bengal Tigers **(women, 7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

FOOTBALL EPL

Arsenal end Villa's streak

Gunners win 4-1 as Man United, Chelsea stumble before new year

LONDON, AFP

Arsenal's Martin Zubimendi (right) scores past Aston Villa's Emiliano Martinez in their 4-1 win at the Emirates Stadium in London on Tuesday night. REUTERS

Arsenal snapped Aston Villa's 11-game winning run with a dominant 4-1 win to open up a five-point Premier League lead as Chelsea and Manchester United wasted the chance to climb into the top four.

Wolves picked up just their third point of the season in a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford, while Chelsea have won once in seven league games after being held 2-2 by Bournemouth.

Arsenal avenged their only defeat in the last 25 games in all competitions earlier this month at Villa Park to take a firm grip of the title race.

Doubts over Villa's ability to live with Arsenal and Manchester City over 38 games were realised as Unai Emery's men were blown away in the second half at the Emirates.

After a tightly-contested first 45 minutes in which Villa had their chances through Ollie Watkins, Arsenal cut loose.

Arteta's men could rely on a set-piece once more to break the deadlock when Gabriel Magalhaes outmuscled Emi Martinez to score on his return to the starting line-up from a hamstring injury.

Martin Odegaard's fine through ball then teed up Martin Zubimendi to quickly double the Gunners' lead.

Two quality strikes rubbed salt in the visitors' wounds as Leandro Trossard and Gabriel Jesus fired in from outside the box.

Watkins netted a consolation but third-placed Villa fall six points behind the leaders.

City can cut the gap at the top back to two points when they travel to Sunderland on January 1.

Wolves taste win

United wasted another chance at Old Trafford to boost their chances of a return to the Champions League next season.

Joshua Zirkzee's deflected effort gave the Red Devils the lead, but Ladislav Krejci's header snapped Wolves' 12-game losing streak.

Ruben Amorim's men remain in sixth, two points outside the top four, after failing to win for the fourth time in their last five home games.

Chelsea failed to lift the gloom at Stamford Bridge as Enzo Maresca's decision to substitute Cole Palmer was booed by the frustrated home fans.

David Brooks gave the Cherries the perfect start but Bournemouth quickly showed why they have conceded more goals on the road than any other side in the English top flight.

Palmer equalised from the penalty spot before Enzo Fernandez was afforded acres of space to fire into the top corner.

But Chelsea failed to deal with a long throw for the second time in the opening 27 minutes when Justin Kluivert turned in Antoine Semenyo's delivery at the back post.

The home fans made clear their frustration at Maresca's decision to replace Palmer with Joao Pedro just after the hour mark as the Blues remain in fifth.

Newcastle secured just a second away league win of the season but were made to sweat after a dream start to beat lowly Burnley 3-1.

Goals from Joelinton and Yoane Wissa had the Magpies 2-0 up inside seven minutes.

A depleted Everton climbed into the top half of the table by getting the better of former boss Sean Dyche for the second time in a month to win 2-0 at Nottingham Forest.

Results: Arsenal: 4 (Magalhaes 48th, Zubimendi 52nd, Trossard 69th, Jesus 78th) bt Aston Villa: 1 (Watkins 90+4th); Burnley: 1 (Laurent 23rd) lt to Newcastle: 3 (Joelinton 2nd, Wissa 7th, Guimaraes 90+3rd); Chelsea: 2 (Palmer 15th P, Fernandez 23rd) drew with Bournemouth: 2 (Brooks 6th, Kluivert 27th); Manchester United: 1 (Zirkzee 27th) drew with Wolves: 1 (Krejci 45th); Nottingham Forest: 0 lt to Everton: 2 (Garner 19th, Barry 79th); West Ham: 2 (Bowen 10th, Paqueta 45+4th P) drew with Brighton: 2 (Welbeck 32nd P, Veltman 61st).

daCunha/AB/1075

SAI Bengaluru to get HPC

Set to cost Rs 75 crore, it is expected to open in a year

BENGALURU, DHNS

Sports Authority of India in Bengaluru.

Sports Authority of India's Netaji Subhas Southern Centre (SAI NSSC) in Bengaluru anticipates a new advanced High Performance Centre (HPC), set to cost Rs 75 crore, and is expected to open its doors in the next 12 months.

The foundation laying ceremony of the Centre was virtually inaugurated by Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya in Delhi on Wednesday.

The HPC will be developed with CSR support from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), which will contribute Rs 60 crore to the expected sum.

"It will significantly strengthen India's elite athlete preparation ecosystem by providing integrated, world-class sports science and support facilities under one roof," stated a press release from the sports ministry.

The release stated that once completed, the HPC will house advanced facilities for sports medicine, strength and conditioning, rehabilitation and recovery, bio-mechanics, physiology, psychology, nutrition, performance analysis, and hydrotherapy, enabling data-driven preparation of elite athletes.

Addressing the ceremony virtually, Mandaviya emphasised that the Centre reflects India's shift from a participation-oriented approach to a podium-focused, high-performance sporting nation.

"This High Performance Centre will ensure that training and recovery are guided by science and technology, enabling our athletes to compete and excel at the highest international level," the Minister said.

(With inputs from PTI)

AIFF requests ISL clubs to confirm participation for '26 season

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

AIFF requests the ISL clubs to confirm their participation and also the format for the season by January 1. ISL MEDIA

With the cloud of doubts remaining the operational cost for the much-delayed Indian Super League season, All India Football Federation (AIFF) requested the clubs to confirm their participation for the season and also the format by January 1.

In a letter, AIFF stated that they need to submit the outcomes of all the meetings, which took place between the clubs and the federation's clubs coordination committee between December 24 to 30, to the sports ministry by January 2.

"Further, the Hon'ble Supreme Court is scheduled to resume after vacation on 5th January 2026, and all stakeholders may be required to file relevant documents in accordance with legal advice," read the AIFF letter.

Jamshedpur FC have already confirmed their participation for the season in Tuesday's meeting but Odisha FC, who are facing their own sponsor challenges, have stated earlier that they will not consider participation without an eligible commercial partner. While finding a suitor is too stiff in the small window, the worry is general among all the clubs, especially after it was suggested that the clubs may have to contribute Rs 2.5 crore for the season instead of the earlier proposed fee of Rs 1 crore in AIFF's 20-year plan.

"See... we all want the league to resume and for that to happen, most of us will agree to participate and even agree to give Rs 2.5 crore but is that going to solve the main issue?" asked a major club official. "You do the math, even with all the club's contributions we are not close to half of the operational cost."

AIFF, in its proposed plan, stated that the operational cost budget for each year is set at Rs 70 crore but Tuesday's meeting estimated the expense of the Goa leg alone at Rs 42 crore.

As far as the hunt for the new commercial partner is concerned, it has been learnt that the federation is preparing to float a revised tender, after the first one found no takers, in accordance with its 20-year plan and could be out in two weeks.

Among other trivial matters, AIFF also mentioned in its letter that to get clarity from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) on whether there could be a one-time relaxation on the minimum number of matches (24 in a season in all domestic competitions combined) in order to be eligible for the continental tournaments, the clubs and the committee must confirm the format they are going to opt for before making a formal request to AFC.

As reported earlier, the clubs have been largely in agreement on the two-group or conference format (east and west) at two centralised venues (Goa and Kolkata), where the top two will compete for the title. In order to increase the number of matches, a play-off phase could be added before the final with the top four from each group qualifying.

National Sports Governance Act partially into effect from Jan 1

NEW DELHI, PTI: The landmark National Sports Governance Act will partially come into effect from January 1, the Sports Ministry announced on Wednesday, paving the way for the institution of an all-powerful National Sports Board (NSB) and a Tribunal to handle sporting disputes.

The Act was notified in the Official Gazette on August 18.

"...the Central Government has appointed 1st January, 2026 as the date on which the provisions of sections 1 to 3, sub-sections (1), (2) and (4) of section 4, sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 5, sub-section (5) of section 8, sub-section (1) of section 11, sections 14 and 15, sub-sections (1) to (7) and (10) of section 17, sections 30 and 31, and sections 33 to 38 of the said Act shall come into force," stated a press release from the Sports Ministry.

The provisions being brought into effect relate to the establishment and governance framework of National Sports Bodies, including the National Olympic Committee, National Paralympic Committee, National Sports Federations (NSFs) and Regional Sports Federations.

After elections under the provisions of the Act, all these bodies will be required to have Executive Committees of no more than 15 members with at least two Sportspersons of Merit in them. The constitution of the National Sports Board (NSB) and the National Sports Tribunal (NST) will also get underway with the partial implementation.

The NSB will feature a Chairperson and members appointed by the Central Government from among "persons of ability, integrity and standing who possesses special knowledge or practical experience in the field of public administration, sports governance, sports law and other related fields."

The appointments will be on the basis of the recommendations of a search-cum-selection committee.

"The phased commencement of the Act is aimed at ensuring a smooth transition to the statutory sports governance framework," the ministry said. The ministry has already allowed NSFs, which have elections due in the next few months, to postpone the process till December for the full-scale implementation.

Kjas brace in Empire FC win

BENGALURU, DHNS: Muhammed Kjas scored a brace while Abhinand and Sachinkumar S also found the back of the net as Empire FC eased to a comfortable 4-1 victory over ADE FC in the BDFA A Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium here on Wednesday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

Abhinand broke the deadlock in the 15th minute to hand Empire a 1-0 lead. Sachinkumar, then, converted from the spot 11 minutes later to double his side's lead. ADE FC pulled one back through Vinu Vinod (40th+3) but Kjas (47th, 48th) scored two back-to-back goals to take the game out of ADE's stretch.

Result: Empire FC: 4 (Abhinand 15th, SachinKumar S 26th pen, Muhammed Kjas M 47th, 48th) bt ADE FC: 1 (Vinu Vinod 40th+3); Shooterz FC: 2 (Fito 19th, Meisnam Chourjit Meitei 38th pen) bt Juno FC: 1 (Balwinder Singh 73rd). Revive FC: 0 drew with Bangalore Gunners FC: 0.

Three Indians join list of FIFA Referees

NEW DELHI, PTI: Three more Indians, including a woman, have been added to the list of FIFA Referees by the world football governing body, the national federation said on Wednesday.

Rachana Kamani **(in pic)** from Gujarat has been added to the FIFA list of women referees for 2026, while Ashwin Kumar (Puducherry) and Aditya Purkayastha (Delhi) figured among men.

Kumar and Purkayastha have completed their AFC Referee Academy course in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, while Rachana is currently undergoing the same course, the All India Football Federation said.

Two Indians -- Muralitharan Pandurangan (Puducherry) and Peter Christopher (Maharashtra) -- have been inducted as FIFA Assistant Referees.

As many as 19 match officials from India are a part of the FIFA list of match officials for 2026.

Indians in FIFA International List of Match Officials 2026: Referees: Venkatesh R, Harish Kundu, Senthil Nathan Sekaran, Crystal John, Ashwin Kumar, Aditya Purkayastha, Ranjita Devi Tekcham, Rachana Hasmukhbhai Kamani.

Assistant Referees: Vairamuthu Parasuraman, Sumanta Dutta, Arun Sasidharan Pillai, Ujjal Halder, Muralitharan Pandurangan, Dipesh Manohar Sawant, Sourav Sarkar, Christopher Peter, Riiohlang Dhar, Elangbam Debala Devi.

Futsal Referee: Vishal Mahendrabhai Vaja.

Mbappe suffers knee sprain, out for three weeks

MADRID, AFP: Real Madrid on Wednesday said that Kylian Mbappe had suffered a knee sprain, delivering a blow to their bid to reel in Liga leaders Barcelona.

"After the tests carried out today on our player Kylian Mbappe by Real Madrid's medical services, he was diagnosed with a sprain in his left knee. Awaiting evolution," the club said in a statement.

Real Madrid did not indicate how long the 27-year-old striker would be out for, but a source close to the France superstar said that he would be absent for at least three weeks. He is therefore a doubt for Sunday's match at home to Real Betis.

Pipers continue winning run

RANCHI, PTI

SG Pipers produced a disciplined performance to edge past JSW Soorma Club 1-0 in a tightly contested Women's Hockey India League match here on Wednesday.

Pipers' captain Navneet Kaur's early strike proved decisive as the table-toppers registered their second consecutive victory.

The Pipers began on a disciplined note, moving the ball with pace and purpose, and their intent was rewarded early in the contest.

Kaur (4th minute) put her side ahead in a moment of individual brilliance. Intercepting a pass in her own half, Kaur surged forward on a scintillating run, dribbled past two JSW Soorma defenders near the circle and calmly fired a well-placed shot to open the scoring.

Navneet Kaur

JSW Soorma attempted to respond with a series of attacking moves, but the SG Pipers' defence stood firm, working in groups to deny space and clear danger efficiently.

Despite sustained pressure from Soorma, the Pipers ensured they carried their slender advantage into the first-quarter break.

Soorma came out with renewed attacking intent in the second quarter as they searched for an equaliser and earned the first penalty corner of the match. However, they were unable to capitalise on the opportunity.

Sensing the momentum shift, SG Pipers focused on maintaining possession through crisp passing, forcing Soorma to chase the game and absorb sustained pressure.

Soorma did manage to win another penalty corner towards the end of the second quarter, but a poor trap let them down as their frustrations in front of goal continued.

Cosmology for feature

KOLKATA SELECTIONS

Cosmology, from the stables of Pesi Shroff and to be ridden by A Prakash, will garner the maximum support in a small field of five runners for the Deepak Khaitan Memorial Indian Produce Stakes, the feature event of the races run over a sprint on New Year's day.

1. So Amazing Cup (Div I) - 1200M: Live It Love It 1, Kindred Spirit 2, Blaze In Blue 3.
2. So Amazing Cup (Div II) - 1200M: Epic Play 1, Memphis 2, Dubai Prince 3.
3. Academy Gold Cup (Div I) - 1200M: Romping Home 1, Zalia 2, Enola Holmes 3.
4. Academy Gold Cup (Div II) - 1200M: Aperol 1, Dubai Ruler 2, Knotty Affair 3.
5. Goodfellas Cup - 1400M: Shine 1, Zuri 2, Golden Glow 3.
6. Astounding Cup (Div I) - 1400M: Polka Dot 1, True Faith 2, Blinky Bill 3.
7. Astounding Cup (Div II) - 1400M: Blue God 1, Ghirardelli 2, Zambezi 3.
8. Deepak Khaitan Memorial Indian Produce Stakes - 1200M: Cosmology 1, Cielo 2, Luther 3.
9. Calcutta Bookmakers Association RCTC Gold Vase - 2200M: Charismatic 1, King Louis 2, Great Guns 3.
10. Multitude Cup (Div I) - 1100M: Resplendence 1, Surprise Fantasy 2, Simran's Attitude 3.
11. Multitude Cup (Div II) 1100M: Lavish Girl 1, Cashaban 2, Winsangel 3.
Day's best: Resplendence.
Jackpot: 7, 8 , 9, 10, 11.
I treble: 3, 4, 5. **II treble:** 6, 7, 8.
III treble: 9, 10, 11.

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DECCAN HERALD
Thursday
January 1, 2026

DH
CELEBRATING
THE POWER OF GOOD

15 CHANGE MAKERS

To Watch In 2026

Dear reader,

As the New Year begins, we are delighted to bring you 15 remarkable stories of change.

Now in its eighth year, *DH* Changemakers throws the spotlight on individuals and groups that inspire hope, spark action, and uphold human values.

Since 2019, Deccan Herald has identified achievers from across Karnataka, profiling them in print, showcasing their work on video, and honouring them at special events. Hailing from fields as diverse as arts, science, public health, sports, education, and human rights, these pioneers have overcome personal and societal odds to demonstrate grit and resilience and rewrite the stories of their communities.

This year, the Changemakers process began in August. In response to our call, we received 500-plus nominations. After several rounds of discussion and debate, our eminent jury, comprising L K Atheeq (former bureaucrat and chairperson, Bengaluru Business Corridor), M S Sriram (professor, public policy, IIM-B), Vanamala Viswanatha (academic and translator), and Padma Shri Dr Vijayalakshmi Deshmane (former director, Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology) selected the 15 Changemakers whose stories you will read in this edition.

This year's cohort, all under 45, includes a scientist transforming snakebite care, an entrepreneur helping farmers protect crops without harming wildlife, an artist inspiring communities through theatre, a social worker reshaping sanitation, and a teacher redefining classrooms with innovations. The youngest, a 20-year-old non-speaking neurodiversity advocate, exemplifies extraordinary courage and determination. From surfers and sustainability entrepreneurs to writers and human rights activists, this group embodies passion, dedication, and a resolute commitment to community empowerment.

For us, documenting their work is an honour. In today's challenging times, their journeys highlight the power of good.

K V SUBRAMANYA
Executive Editor

THE JURY

This year's Changemakers reflect inclusivity and diversity. We looked at ideas, persistence, and impact, both current and potential. Many work selflessly in challenging fields, often with little personal reward. They demonstrate altruism and a commitment to the greater good, despite obstacles and uncertainty.

L K Atheeq IAS (retired)
Chairperson,
Bengaluru Business Corridor

These inspiring individuals should persist in bringing about positive change to create more opportunities and spread peace and happiness. Their commitment not only benefits those around them today but also lays the foundation for a better, more compassionate society tomorrow.

Vijayalakshmi Deshmane
Former Director, Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology

CHANGEMAKERS

Aditi
Neurodiversity rights
Bengaluru
Age: 20 yrs

Anupama
Literature
Bengaluru
Age: 38 yrs

Archana
Sanitation
Hassan
Age: 35 yrs

Arshiya
Entrepreneurship
Bengaluru
Age: 42 yrs

Arundathi
Transgender rights
Chitradurga
Age: 39 yrs

Ayan
Agritech
Bengaluru
Age: 35 yrs

Baby
Health
Chamarajanagar
Age: 28 yrs

Bhuvaneshwari
Community empowerment
Vijayapura
Age: 33 yrs

Jabeena
Social justice
Davangere
Age: 39 yrs

Kartik
Science
Dharwad
Age: 40 yrs

Madhusudan
Education
Mysuru
Age: 40 yrs

Naveen
Cinema, Empowerment
Shivamogga
Age: 29 yrs

Rohan & Tanvi
Sports
Udupi
Age: 33 & 25 yrs

Sadashiva
Rural development
Kalaburagi
Age: 44 yrs

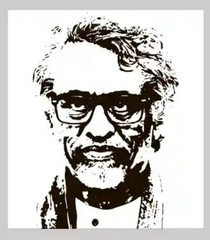
Shakeel
Theatre
Vijayapura
Age: 40 yrs

THE JURY

The Changemakers reflect the spirit of the awards. This recognition sends out a powerful message that society values their work and encourages them to persist and inspire others. The nominations were such that they helped us evolve a shared framework to fairly assess and celebrate their impactful work.

Vanamala Viswanatha
Academic and translator

We have 15 Changemakers from diverse backgrounds. It is heartening to see innovative ideas coming from across Karnataka — the range and impact are remarkable. A Changemaker's path is often challenging as they run into roadblocks and face scepticism. Those who achieve significant impact focus on one meaningful idea and remain persistent.



M S Sriram
Professor,
Public Policy, IIM-B

INTERNAL JURY: S R Ramakrishna, K V Subramanya, Anitha Pailoor

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Films that inspire, change that lasts

Naveen Tejaswi's commitment to cinema and community is opening new horizons for children in Sagara

Pranati A S

In the 1980s, a young Manjamma protested against the unequal wages paid to men and women at the farm she worked on. When the mason claimed that men were capable of harder labour, she demanded a contest. The challenge was a race in which participants had to run while carrying a sand bag. Manjamma won.

Whether she managed to succeed in securing equal wages is uncertain. But the resistance she embodied has endured. Her grandson, Naveen Tejaswi, now a filmmaker, grew up immersed in this spirit. That legacy of resistance may have inspired him to establish a community centre for children in his village of Hosabale near Sagara in Shivamogga district, which he named 'Bheemashaale' after B R Ambedkar.

The village has about 300 houses, most belonging to the Deevaru caste, including Naveen's family, a tribal community classified as OBC.

Surya Saathi, who led a theatre workshop at Bheemashaale, calls Naveen's initiative as a key to dreaming and aspiring. "Only with access can you dream. I see Bheemashaale as that key for these children," he says.

Through Bheemashaale, Naveen empowers rural children from marginalised communities, helping them learn new skills, explore opportunities and pursue their dreams.

In the belief that art is the highest form of resistance, Naveen runs workshops on various art and folk forms. "Art has helped me understand the world. Art is empowering," he says.

Naren from Bengaluru's Adavi Collective, who has been conducting *tamate* workshops at Bheemashaale for the past two years, says such platforms let children express themselves through art alongside education, thereby fostering change in the village. "In today's political climate, it is important for children to learn to have a voice," he adds.

Snapshots

- Naveen received the Toto Award for Creative Writing in 2024 for writing compelling stories reflecting life in his village
- Using the prize money, he founded Bheemashaale, a community space for learning local art forms and empowering marginalised communities
- He has made three short films, all set in his village and inspired by personal stories

Naveen also invites people from different professions to interact with the children so that they can imagine lives beyond what they see around them. As a child, Naveen believed that becoming a government school teacher was the highest goal anyone in his village could aspire to. He was not focused on his studies—until a friend had to drop out in sixth grade to work alongside his father to repay an inherited debt. Naveen's family, too, had faced similar hardship. "I did not want that life for myself," he recalls.

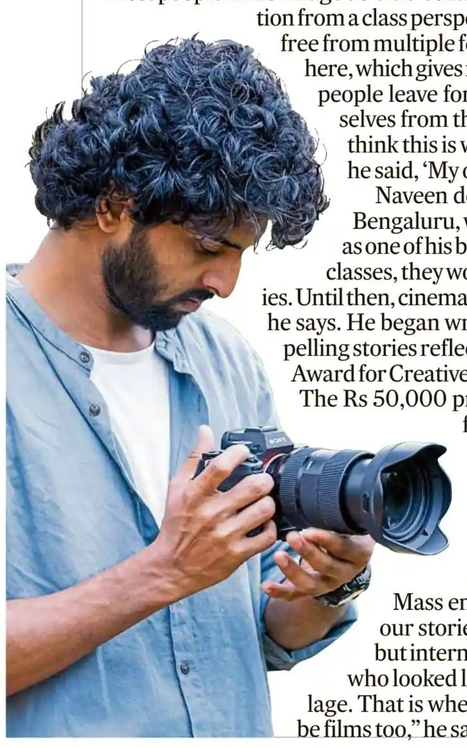
Naveen's work in community empowerment has fuelled his filmmaking. He involves his entire village in his films—from his *ajji* to shopkeepers, passersby, children and neighbours. "They say it takes a village to raise a child. It took a village to make a film, in my case," he laughs.

He has made three short films so far—*Bidugade, Habba Haridina Suggi Shivaratri* and *Imana*. All three are set in his village and narrate personal stories. Through a poignant narrative, *Bidugade* explores the innocence of children trapped in caste and hierarchies imposed by society. *Habba Haridina Suggi Shivaratri* tells a heart-wrenching story about the fate of two boys caught in a hoax that spreads across the Western Ghats during the Covid-19 pandemic. In *Imana*, Naveen reflects on the first time he flew on an aeroplane.

He has completed the script for a feature film. He is also writing a book, an anthology of 10 interconnected stories set in his village. Titled *Flower Anthology*, each story is named after a flower. He is also interested in making music and released his first single last February.

Naveen emphasises the importance of telling stories from within a community. "For me, personal and community growth are interlinked. Efforts to help my family show immediate results, but community work takes longer to bear fruit, and its impact lasts much longer."

Most people in his village do blue-collar work. "There is discrimination from a class perspective, too. I was able to break free from multiple forms of discrimination to get here, which gives me more responsibility. Many people leave for the city and distance themselves from their village and community. I think this is what Ambedkar meant when he said, 'My own people failed me'."



Naveen describes St Joseph's College, Bengaluru, where he pursued his degree, as one of his biggest influences. "In English classes, they would show us all kinds of movies. Until then, cinema meant Kannada films to me," he says. He began writing in college and his compelling stories reflecting village life won the Toto Award for Creative Writing in Kannada in 2024. The Rs 50,000 prize money became the seed funding for Bheemashaale.

Watching films at the Bengaluru International Film Festival was transformative for Naveen. "It made me realise that all kinds of lives could make it to cinema. Mass entertainers made it seem like our stories could never become films, but international films featured people who looked like me, my family and my village. That is when I realised our stories could be films too," he says.

A coffee blend for change

Arshiya Bose is enhancing livelihoods and sustainable coffee production in the B R Hills through fair pay, capacity building, biodiversity-friendly farms and knowledge sharing

Sweekruthi K

In the *haadis* (hamlets) of the Biligirirangana Hills, coffee growers' homes reflect new changes — repaired roofs, renovated storefronts and the odd new phone or motorbike — driven by better prices, value addition and a community pulping facility.

It was nearly 10 years ago that the seeds of change first sprouted here — it began with Arshiya Bose, a human geographer by profession, connecting with the coffee growers in the Soliga community and exploring the links between the social, ecological and economic contexts. What started with buying coffee from 10 growers has now expanded to around 650 people across four landscapes, including the Nilgiris and Palani Hills in Tamil Nadu.

Coffee growing has significant ecological costs – deforestation, replacement of native trees with exotic species, higher pesticide use and habitat loss. This is especially concerning as the region is rich in biodiversity.

Many growers in the Biligirirangana Hills (B R Hills) come from farming families, with coffee being a more recent shift. "About 30 years ago, the Coffee Board gave 12 people coffee beans to grow, and when that yielded good results, we realised this was a good option," says Kethe Gowda, a grower from the Soliga tribe who now serves on the board of Black Baza, one of India's first biodiversity-friendly coffee brands, founded by Arshiya in 2016.

His colleague and fellow Soliga, Sannarangegowda adds, "While we got good yields, the issue was bad prices."

For indigenous communities, access to the market is especially challenging, notes Arshiya. "We noticed a 56% differential in the price at which we bought coffee, versus what the farmers were used to getting," she adds.

Black Baza introduced better practices, paying growers 1.2–1.3 times the market rate and weighing coffee at the farm. "Over time, the higher rates and transparent weighing process caught on across the community. Even if we were not buying from every grower, they felt empowered enough to ask for transparency," says Arshiya.

"We had grown coffee for years, but Arshiya *madam* brought knowledge with her," says Kolle Gowda, a Soliga coffee grower. "She taught us how to pick, wash and dry coffee," he adds.

From here, came the avenue to grow further, with the introduction of post-harvest processing methods and different varieties. "We learnt fermenting the berries. For example, I now produce honey coffee and earn more when I sell it," says Kethe Gowda. Black Baza incentivises such efforts, allowing growers to process coffee and earn a premium for their work. This includes yellow honey, red honey and washed coffees.

Capacity-building in the community has involved training on various aspects, says Asjad Ahmed, who oversees post-harvest processing, quality and exports at the company. From soil health and planting to post-harvest drying, growers have been introduced to new nuances.

A unique, ongoing challenge is translating the largely foreign lexicon of coffee aromas and flavours. Terms like 'yuzu' or 'roselle' are often used to describe flavour notes, but over time, the team found flavours like 'tamarind' to be a more accessible reference.

The process of learning together, and seeing tangible change has been slow, over a decade in the making.

Snapshots

- Arshiya Bose founded Black Baza in 2016 to support small coffee growers
- Black Baza trains growers to create diverse coffee blends, enabling them to earn a premium
- The coffee packets, which include details about the farmers, consistently attract consumer interest

Beyond sustainable livelihoods, Black Baza's work focuses on regenerative, biodiversity-friendly farming. "Our partner producers grow coffee without chemical fertilisers and we ensure farms retain indigenous tree diversity and forest cover," says Arshiya.

Arshiya first recognised the potential for change during her PhD, when she studied market incentives for biodiversity conservation. Her research took her to coffee growers across Karnataka, including the B R Hills. "Rather than broad principles, we set conservation priorities based on the landscape and what producers want to conserve. This often includes species like bees, earthworms and termites, as well as native trees," she says.

Translating these principles to the brand has involved unique approaches. Each coffee variety is named after an endangered species, letting consumers choose options like the Tiger Beetle, Loris or Galaxy Frog for their morning cup. Offerings include Robusta, Arabica and various blends.

"Jumping Ant is one of my favourite varieties," says Bharath Surendra, a product designer in Goa. "They give a small card with the farmer's photos and details of where the coffee was grown. I find it quite nice," he adds. Customers also engage with the growers' stories and innovation in varieties at regular events at the roastery in Bengaluru.

Arshiya's foray into entrepreneurship was accidental. "During my research, farmers were asking if I would do something useful with my study," she says. She credits National Geographic Explorers and the Acumen Network for aiding peer-to-peer learning as she navigated a new field.

Entering the space was no mean feat. "In the early days, coffee traders resisted the change. We faced threats in the field. But we persevered," she says.

What's ahead? Expansion into other landscapes, a cafe in Bengaluru and coffee tastings in various cities. The vision: empowered grower communities, diverse plant and animal life at farms, sustainable practices, and thousands of cups of quality coffee.

A life dedicated to improving sanitation

Archana K R's mission is changing how children and communities experience hygiene

Asra Mavad

In the cool, mist-laced folds of the Western Ghats, where Archana K R grew up walking barefoot to her government school, dreams were modest and practical: a pair of Hawai chappals, a desk to sit on, a steel cup to drink coffee from. While she used a steel cup at home, she was often served drink in coconut shells in public because of caste-based discrimination. Yet one dream, quiet and persistent, would come to define her life: a toilet.

Archana was 14 when she first saw a toilet — at the veterinary hospital in Sakleshpur, where her father worked as a veterinary assistant. Fear of snakes, shame and deliberate dehydration during school hours became everyday realities — all because there were no toilets.

"I grew up believing sanitation was not important. As I got older, I began to notice the gaps. It is appalling to see the same situation continue decades later," she says.

Years later, long after she had left her village Nelagahalli to pursue a Master's degree in social work in Bengaluru, the memory returned with sudden clarity. It surfaced at a government school during her early work with an NGO. While auditing sanitation facilities, she asked the girls where their toilet was. They hesitated. Finally, they led her to a newly inaugurated block—locked, unused and draped in spiderwebs. The girls avoided drinking water altogether.

"Standing there," she says, "I realised I was staring at my childhood again."

Across districts, she saw the same story: toilets that existed only on paper, designs that ignored the realities of children, and menstrual waste piled up in corners due to lack of guidance.

Between 2017 and 2020, while auditing 300 schools for non-profits, she found a startling figure: on average, a school had an annual toilet-maintenance budget of Rs 108.

This was the moment her work shifted from observation to activism.

Today, at 35, Archana is one of Karnataka's leading voices in the sanitation movement. She is the founder of Stand4SHE, an initiative that helped push the state towards its first dedicated toilet-maintenance budget.

She discovered the power of petitions and public pressure early in her career. Her first campaign in 2018 demanded that Swachh Bharat toilets along National Highway 75 be unlocked; 10 of the 14 were eventually opened.

Next, she began a petition to increase funds for toilet maintenance and improve education in government schools. Archana leveraged social media to highlight poorly maintained school toilets. Every broken latch, every dry tap, every dark cubicle she documented went online. The images were hard to ignore, started drawing attention and eventually reached the then education minister S Suresh Kumar.

Snapshots

- In 2018, Archana's first campaign demanded that Swachh Bharat toilets along National Highway 75 be unlocked
- Her petition led the state government to announce a Rs100-crore sanitation and drinking-water budget for government schools
- Stand4She works across four pillars: data and research, behavioural change, infrastructure redesign and sanitation squad training

On March 8, 2021 — after months of relentless pressure — the Karnataka government announced a dedicated sanitation and drinking-water budget of Rs 100 crore for government schools. It was the first such allocation in the state.

Today, Stand4She works across four pillars — data and research, behavioural change, redesigning infrastructure and training sanitation squads.

"We plan to identify and train motivated youth across villages so that sanitation advocacy becomes local, continuous and future-focused," she says.

Archana and her team of dedicated volunteers have brought focus to menstrual health and hygiene, carrying out awareness campaigns and workshops for teens in government schools.

Stand4She is planning to run a reality check on how the funds allocated by the state government are being utilised in schools. "A ground report will be prepared after visiting 10 schools in each district," says Ashish V R of Stand4She.

For Archana, this journey continues to unfold. "My work is still not a matter of pride for my family, because it involves sanitation. I have even had marriage proposals rejected because my work revolves around toilets," she shares.

But every time a girl confidently points to her school toilet and says, "We use it now", Archana feels the gap between her barefoot childhood and her present narrow just a little more. For her, dignity begins with something as simple — and as revolutionary — as a toilet.

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Turning the tide on migration

Bhuvaneshwari Kamble has empowered 400 women and their families in Vijayapura, curbing their migration

Pavan Kumar H

As a child growing up at Babalad in Vijayapura's Indi taluk, every time Bhuvaneshwari's neighbours packed their bags to migrate to bigger cities for their livelihood, she would sense a rising bubble of excitement. Typically, the neighbours would migrate for over six months every year, to find work as canal diggers, and labourers in sugarcane fields, brick kilns and construction sites.

Bhuvaneshwari Kamble wished her father too would follow in the neighbours' footsteps so he could save some money and bring home lots of new clothes. Neither her father Kallappa Harijan (who recently passed away) nor her mother Bayaza Bai, was in favour of this yearly rigmarole. At one point, Bhuvaneshwari's mother had worked as a migrant labourer in the grape fields of Vijayapura and Bagalkot districts and knew what it entailed.

These early experiences shaped Bhuvaneshwari's choices later on. She would go on to establish Odaladhwani Mahila Okkuta, a federation of 15 self-help groups in the taluk, to help women achieve financial independence and change the social and educational landscape for the next generation. The 400 women of the Okkuta are now able to earn a livelihood in their village, and their families have stopped migrating. They rear livestock, grow organic food grains and sell homemade products.

"Women are the worst affected by migration. If we can prevent women from migrating, their families can flourish," she says.

Looking back, 33-year-old Bhuvaneshwari says, "It was a privilege for our family of seven to have even one meal a day. We eked out a living from seasonal cultivation on a small farm. My father had a contract job with the forest department for a salary of Rs 2,000 per month."

Snapshots

- Bhuvaneshwari has set up a federation of 15 self-help groups in Indi taluk in Vijayapura district
- In 2020, she launched Kalika Kendra, an evening learning centre for underprivileged, often migrant, children
- Her doctoral thesis on migration and women's lives was shaped by her own struggles

Despite her family's financial struggles, her passion for learning remained undeterred. Although she wanted to study economics, she could not afford the subsidised fee of Rs 2,500, back in 2013-14. She then took up a Master's degree in Women's Studies at the Akkamahadevi Women's University in Vijayapura. Late Prof M B Dilshad of the Department of Women's Studies offered to sponsor her studies.

A gold medalist in her Master's, Bhuvaneshwari's doctoral thesis was shaped by her personal struggles. As part of her research, she interacted with over 1,000 women from the border regions of rural Vijayapura, and Solapur in Maharashtra, who had migrated for work. Prof Hemalatha H M, Bhuvaneshwari's research guide and former faculty member at the Women's University explains, "Women who migrate face untold hardships, often taking up work that is nothing short of bonded labour. Even then, their annual earnings barely reach Rs 60,000 to Rs 1 lakh." Bhuvaneshwari has highlighted these aspects in her research, points out Hemalatha. She is also supporting Bhuvaneshwari by providing financial assistance for her activities.

From research to real change

After completing her PhD in 2021, Bhuvaneshwari guided the women she met during her research to take up livelihood activities aligned with their skills and available resources. "She interacted with scientists at the Vijayapura Krishi Vigyan Kendra and helped us access scientific information and good quality inputs," says Rajeshwari Hosand, a farmer from Savalsang village in Vijayapura.

After learning improved cultivation techniques and reaping successful harvests, some women started making value-added products. For instance, Mahadevi Shivashur, who grows groundnuts, makes *shenga holige* and sells them at Ragi Kana, a weekly farmers' market in Bengaluru.

Bhuvaneshwari has also empowered the women of the Okkuta to advocate for change. As Babalad resident Bhagyashri Poojari explains, "Till 2022-23, none of us had stepped into a gram panchayat (GP). It was only with her encouragement that we demanded our GP president and panchayat development officer to provide us with drinking water, roads, houses, and work under the national rural employment guarantee scheme." Last year, after persistent demands, the women were offered lake rejuvenation work as part of the scheme.

As part of her efforts to curb migration and support rural education, Bhuvaneshwari launched Kalika Kendra in 2020, a learning centre for underprivileged children, especially those from migrant families. These centres, where children get to learn from women graduates of the village, function in the evening in four villages.

Basavaraj Hattalli, an assistant teacher at Babalad Government High School, says that a majority of migrant students find it difficult to follow lessons due to frequent breaks in their education. "The Kalika Kendra has bridged the learning gap for these students. Now, they actively participate in extracurricular activities as well."

Game changer for snakebite care

Kartik Sunagar's pioneering research offers universal antibodies and oral pills to transform snakebite treatment in India and beyond

Kushagra Bhardwaj

When Kartik Sunagar shows footage of a mouse collapsing and dying within a minute of being injected with Russell's viper venom, the outcome appears grim. Russell's viper, one of India's 'big four' snakes, accounts for nearly 43% of all snakebites. But in the next clip, after the same venom is given alongside his lab-designed antibody, the mouse is scurrying around hours later. The "game changer", as Kartik calls it, is this antibody, which saved the mouse and could potentially save human lives.

This stark demonstration marks a significant advancement in snakebite treatment: an oral tablet that victims could take immediately after a bite, potentially buying crucial time before hospital-based antivenom treatment or lessening reliance on risky antivenom infusions.

For Kartik, who heads the Evolutionary Venomics Lab at the Centre for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru, this innovation addresses an urgent crisis. India records roughly 58,000 snakebite deaths annually, almost half of the global total of 1.4 lakh. "Three times that number lose limbs," Kartik notes. The challenge lies not only in the high frequency of bites but also in the limitations of current treatments. Modern antivenoms rely on century-old technology: horses are immunised with venom and their antibodies are then extracted. This method is often inefficient, expensive and frequently ineffective.

Kartik says, "Antivenom vials contain less than 10% antibodies that actually target venom components. The majority of the vial serves no therapeutic purpose."

The consequences are severe: patients often require multiple vials, driving up costs and increasing the risk of potentially deadly allergic reactions to horse proteins. Research shows that nearly 80% of snakebite victims experience adverse reactions to the antivenom itself.

However, before developing a new antivenom, a bigger challenge lies in improving our understanding of snakes. Kartik's team, with special permission, collected venom samples from over 1,000 snakes across India and at least 14 other countries, discovering striking variations, even between populations separated by 50 km.

The venom of Tamil Nadu cobras differs significantly from that of Karnataka cobras. Some Russell's vipers produce venom up to three times more potent than others of the same species. Kartik's research also shows that venom varies with the snake's age, environmental conditions and diet.

This research is significant because India's entire antivenom supply depends on snakes from just two districts in Tamil Nadu. "We produce antivenoms by collecting venoms from a one-point location," Kartik explains, "and that antivenom treats snake bites across all of India."

This realisation drove Kartik towards two revolutionary approaches. First, he and his team engineered synthetic monoclonal antibodies designed to work across species and continents. These antibodies are effective against kraits in Southeast Asia, monocled cobras in Eastern India, king cobras in Western India and black mambas in Africa.

Separately, for Russell's vipers, which cause more deaths and disabilities globally than any other snake, they created a single antibody that provides complete protection. "A solution to Russell's vipers' bites is basically a solution to the snakebite problem in India," Kartik says.

Snapshots

- Kartik Sunagar's research shows that venom varies with a snake's age, environment and diet, even within the same species
- He is developing oral tablets from small-molecule inhibitors, which could revolutionise treatment nationwide
- His lab at IISc is among the world's three labs studying venom evolution, toxinology and recombinant antibodies

The second breakthrough, oral tablets from small-molecule inhibitors, could transform and revolutionise snakebite treatment nationwide. The combination neutralises key venom toxins such as Russell's viper venom effectively, providing victims crucial time to reach hospitals or receive further care. His research also shows that these tablets could help minimise permanent disabilities caused by snake venom. Discussions are ongoing with the Indian Council of Medical Research for clinical trials. Timelines remain uncertain, but Kartik feels optimistic about the tablet's affordability.

Early exposure

Growing up in Dharwad in a home brimming with "art, ideas and curiosity", Kartik's parents, artists and educators, nurtured his fascination with the natural world. Romulus Whitaker's wildlife documentaries and weekend excursions shaped his earliest encounters with nature. During his graduation at Karnatak Science College, his fascination began with the question of how some proteins that exist harmlessly in the human body can turn toxic. After exploring venom evolution in his PhD and conducting research on transgenic sea anemones in Israel, he returned to India in 2017 to find solutions to the snakebite crisis. His pioneering work analysing the venom of India's 'big four' snakes — Russell's viper, common krait, Indian cobra, saw-scaled viper — marked a national first, revealing how toxicity varies with age and geography — fundamental insights for developing effective treatments.

Today, his lab is among the world's three labs studying venom evolution, toxinology and recombinant antibodies. With 30 to 40 researchers and over Rs 39 crore in research funding, his work has generated more than 5,625 citations in scientific literature. The lab also acts as a base for other research projects, including on scorpion and wasp venoms.

In a full-circle moment, veteran herpetologist Whitaker says, "I have been impressed with the venomics and antivenomics work being done by Kartik and his dynamic team. Everything they are doing has important implications for improving antivenom, which will, of course, positively impact the treatment of snakebites."

For a crisis that has persisted for centuries, Kartik Sunagar's innovations are more than scientific advancement. They could transform how the country confronts one of its deadliest public health challenges.

In a quiet world of words

Through creativity and resilience, **Aditi Sowmyanarayan** is reshaping perceptions of autism and neurodiversity

Shashikala M S

Aditi Sowmyanarayan introduces herself much as she lives — with warmth, humour and a storyteller's ease. "Your friendly neighbourhood author and storyteller," she says, as if inviting a stranger into a world she has long carried in her head. At 20, Aditi is a young autistic adult whose imagination, resilience and quiet determination have already shaped her into a writer and an emerging voice in the neurodiversity space.

Aditi describes her childhood simply as "happy," even though she sensed early on that she was different from the children around her. Words came easily to others while she struggled to get a syllable out. She often heard the word autism, but it was only around the age of eight that she was formally told she was autistic. "There were times I wished it wasn't the case," she says. "But my family, especially my mother, never gave up. What makes me different is what makes me unique — that understanding came much later." Autism spectrum disorder or ASD is a neurodevelopmental disability with persistent difficulties in social communication and restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests or activities.

Much of Aditi's early life unfolded in silence, observing everything but unable to express herself. That inner world, rich with characters and colour, became her refuge — and later, her creative wellspring.

School brought mixed experiences: the joy of belonging, her first performance on stage and her first school picnic. But it also brought a constant underestimation of her abilities. "People assumed I didn't understand because I couldn't demonstrate learning in the expected way," she says.

Her turning point came with technology at Ishanya India Foundation. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) tools like Avaz helped her communicate while learning to type opened a path to writing, and to the world. Her inner stories found their way onto the page.

She credits her mother as her fiercest supporter, and her educators Shaheli Mukherjee and Varsha Ramdas for believing in her and gently pushing her boundaries.

Aditi writes content regularly for Avaz, Sol's Arc and India Autism Centre, creates social media material for Reframing Disability, and conducts webinars on autism and AAC advocacy. She serves on the Global Steering Committee of the Institute of Neurodiversity.

Snapshots

- Aditi, a non-speaking neurodivergent person, is an emerging voice in the neurodiversity space
- She conducts webinars on autism and serves on the Global Steering Committee of the Institute of Neurodiversity
- She is working on her next novel – Feet on Ground, Head in the Air – with a publisher

Her presence, says Chitra Paul, Co-founder of Allinclusive Foundation, Bengaluru, has helped challenge long-held assumptions. "I believe Aditi's contribution — and that of other non-speaking young adults like her — is that they have forced professionals and families to rethink their understanding of autism. That understanding continues to be flawed, but what these youngsters have done is dent the myth of equating non-speaking with intellectual disability," she says.

Chitra also edited *Talking Fingers*, a book to which Aditi contributed — a compilation of 16 non-speaking writers responding to 20 questions to capture the world as they see it. And in the midst of all this, Aditi is also working on her next novel — *Feet on Ground, Head in the Air* — now with a publisher.

Her days begin with a morning walk, followed by writing or advocacy work. After lunch, she studies with her educator. Once a week, she attends cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to manage severe social anxiety. Recently, something small filled her with pride: she placed her own order at a café using her AAC app. "A hard-earned victory," she says — a reminder that independence is built in increments.

Aditi's advocacy carries a clear message: see the person, not the diagnosis. "Have an open mind," she says. "Help us build on our strengths while accommodating our challenges. And remember, disability doesn't make anyone less worthy of autonomy or a fulfilling life."

Friendships, to her, are defined by the freedom to express herself without fear of judgment. Shared spaces, where everyone moves to their own rhythm, comfort her.

"I have had a great time talking with Aditi on multiple occasions, and this only makes it a good basis for collaboration," says Tarun Paul, co-author of Talking Fingers. Aditi and Tarun along with another adult autistic Aniket, started Silent Expressions, a WhatsApp group under the Institute of Neurodiversity's India chapter, to create opportunities for interaction among young autistic people.

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Tribal care that goes the distance

Baby G combines professional training and lived experience to ensure Adivasi communities access healthcare

Varsha Gowda

On a cold December morning, an 18-year-old Adivasi woman gave birth to a weak baby, weighing just 1.22 kg, at Chamarajanagar district hospital. Despite the infant needing intensive care for infections, the anxious family repeatedly attempted to leave against medical advice. District tribal health coordinator Baby G intervened, using her cultural connection to build trust and explain the life-saving necessity of continued treatment. Her efforts delayed their departure until the baby reached 1.4 kg; the infant is now recovering at home.

For many Adivasi patients, public hospitals remain intimidating and alien. Distance, language barriers and systemic discrimination often restrict access to healthcare, causing delays even in emergencies.

Baby was appointed Karnataka's first district tribal health coordinator by the Department of Tribal Welfare at a time when access to traditional medicinal plants was declining among forest-dependent populations and modern healthcare remained out of reach.

Since her appointment in 2023, Baby, a trained nurse, has helped around 2,000 indigenous people access care. Her role provides vital representation for Adivasi communities within the public health system. "Adivasi communities remain underrepresented in professional fields. Baby's work also aims to inspire young indigenous women to join healthcare delivery systems and extend care to their communities," says Dr Prashant N S, director, Institute of Public Health, technical partner of the Tribal Health Navigator model under which Baby was recruited.

The lack of primary healthcare means preventable or treatable conditions often worsen before patients reach higher centres, says Madegowda C, an Adivasi community leader.

Snapshots

- Baby is Karnataka's first district tribal health coordinator
- She helps tribal people access free medical treatment and Ayushman Bharat benefits
- Her work also aims to inspire young indigenous people to join healthcare delivery systems

Padregouda, a Soliga health worker, explains how Baby's presence alters the experience for indigenous people. "Knowing where to go and whom to approach has helped persuade people who fear modern medicine to receive medical intervention," he says.

The presence of social networks often determines how hospital systems are navigated. "These networks do not yet exist for tribal populations at the level of secondary and tertiary hospitals," says Dr Tanya Seshadri, a community health consultant.

Adept in healthcare settings, Baby navigates this delicate line of providing direction and rebuilding trust among communities long alienated from public healthcare while confronting the structural inequalities embedded within the system itself.

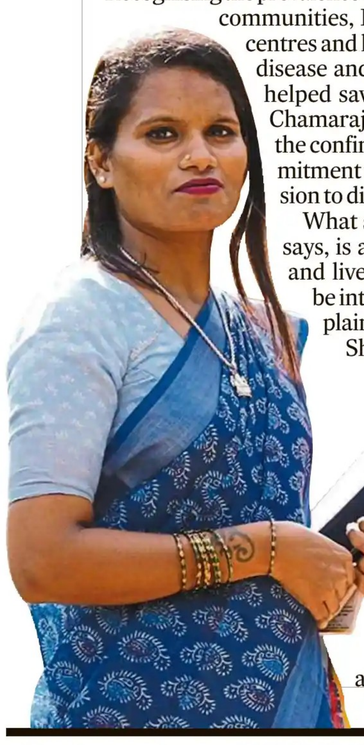
Her dual role as a healthcare provider and a member of the Soliga community allows her to tackle one of the most persistent and overlooked barriers to care. "Treatment dropout rates are high among Adivasi communities. Many do not wish to stay beyond a day, as this increases their food and accommodation expenses," says Tanya.

Baby serves as a bridge between the community and medical staff, says Dr H G Manjunath, dean of Chamarajanagar Institute of Medical Sciences.

She has held several community sessions to familiarise people with her role, common health issues and barriers to care. During this period, she found that many families lacked even basic identification documents, which often blocked access to welfare schemes meant to make healthcare free.

Baby and other health navigators raised the issue with Chamarajanagar Deputy Commissioner Shilpa Nag. "We collaborated to hold a camp-based registration drive," Shilpa says. About 7,000 people obtained identification documents through the drive. Baby's efforts in ensuring that maternal health goals, particularly institutional deliveries, are met have also been commendable, Shilpa adds.

Recognising the prevalence of genetic blood disorders among Adivasi communities, Baby worked with primary healthcare centres and hospitals to ensure testing for sickle cell disease and thalassemia. Her interventions have helped save many lives, says Dr S Chidambara, Chamarajanagar district health officer. "Beyond the confines of the job, it is her sincerity and commitment that drives her involvement from admission to discharge," he says.



What strengthens her ability to do this, Baby says, is a combination of professional training and lived experience. "Medical language can be intimidating and conditions need to be explained with patience and clarity," she says.

She is aware of how institutional practices exclude Adivasi people. From a young age, her father stressed the importance of giving back to the community, and her mother's work as a nurse inspired her.

This continues to motivate Baby as she navigates the space between hospital and community. She hopes her team sets an example that other districts with socially vulnerable populations can emulate.

Hope and growth in Honna Kiranagi

Sadashiva Hydra has not only transformed a barren landscape in Kalaburagi into a vibrant ecosystem but also brought hope to thousands of rural people in need of work

Vittal Shastri

Imagine 1,600 acres of dry and lifeless barren land. Now, reimagine that land transformed into a lush landscape of 68,000 trees. Not only did 44-year-old Sadashiva Hydra imagine this transformation but also turned it into reality. A resident of Honna Kiranagi village in Kalaburagi, Sadashiva Hydra hasn't stopped at converting the vast stretch of land into a green paradise; he has also transformed the lives of over 1,000 workers of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

Over the last decade, several households have become self-reliant due to wages earned from the scheme. They have built houses, and enabled their children's education, as well.

Sadashiva began work as a daily wage worker under the scheme, which saw a poor response when it was initiated there in 2015. Landless labourers faced acute poverty because of recurring drought. There was also a lack of awareness about the scheme. Meanwhile, without the knowledge of poor labourers, job cards were being misused by some gram panchayat members. The plight of these labourers motivated Sadashiva to approach district-level officials with a plea to provide more jobs and curb corruption.

Recognising his tireless efforts in organising labourers and issuing job cards, officials appointed Sadashiva as Kayaka Bandhu, meaning a friend committed to the welfare of workers. Two years on, he was promoted to a field inspector. Over the next five years, more than 1,000 people started working as part of the MGNREG scheme. With permissions from relevant authorities, they have grown over 10 varieties of local species as part of the scheme's afforestation drive. The plants have been raised in six layers along the 18 km boundary of a vast tract of land that earlier belonged to the Karnataka Power Corporation and has now been acquired by the Textile Department for the establishment of a mega textile park.

Sadashiva goes door to door providing job cards, monitors all scheme-related works and ensures timely wage payments to prevent migration in the 12,000-strong community.

Back in 2018, Sadashiva pledged an acre of the five acres of land he owns to borrow Rs 9.5 lakh (since cleared), so that he could fund watering the plants. "Although my mother was initially sceptical about my campaign to plant one lakh trees, she is now proud and happy to see the results," Sadashiva says.

Such growth of hundreds of trees, according to Range Forest Officer Nagesh Hadapad, has created a conducive microclimate, providing shelter to blackbucks, foxes and rabbits, apart from reducing temperatures during the summer.

Sadashiva has also led the construction of over 42,000 trench-cum-bunds as part of an afforestation drive, which helped raise groundwater levels, preserve soil fertility and ease drinking water scarcity after revival of the lake in the village. Over 80% of labourers who worked on this project are women in the 30-75 age group, says Sadashiva.

Snapshots

- Sadashiva Hydra led a plantation drive on 1,600 acres in Kalaburagi, creating a thriving ecosystem
- He pledged one acre of land to borrow Rs 9.5 lakh (since repaid) to fund watering the plants
- He has helped over 1,000 people secure regular employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

Bagamma is one such landless labourer who has worked for a decade under the scheme. The 35-year-old and her physically challenged husband Saibanna have used their savings to rear sheep. For 25-year-old Bhagavantray Pujari and his wife Basamma, the scheme has been a godsend. Bhagavantray's mother was able to get an eye surgery done with their savings. "The Rs 370 daily wage provided under the scheme has helped us support our families, as landlords in the village pay only up to Rs 300 for a full day's agricultural work," Bhagavantray says.

Against the odds

Sadashiva has faced severe personal challenges, including depression and thoughts of self-harm. A turning point came when the local panchayat development officer enrolled Sadashiva into the MGNREG scheme. Today, Sadashiva guides many villagers on how to save their wages and resolve disputes. He also earns additional income from agricultural activities by leasing land. Sadashiva also spends Rs 1.5 lakh each season from his own pocket to supply drinking water to labourers working under the scheme.

Sadashiva's work at the grassroots has brought about lasting change in the lives of many and this has drawn attention. Chandrakanth Jeevangi, Assistant Director of Agriculture, Jewargi, and former administrative officer of Honna Kiranagi Gram Panchayat, credits Sadashiva with getting more people enrolled into the scheme. "Sadashiva has nurtured every plant like his own child and treated all job card holders as his family," he says.

Anirudh Sravan, former chief executive officer of Kalaburagi Zilla Panchayat and current Personal Secretary to the Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, likens Sadashiva to the late Saalumarada Thimmakka, a legendary environmentalist. The senior IAS officer lauds Sadashiva as an inspiring personality, who has turned around the fortunes of a land and its people.

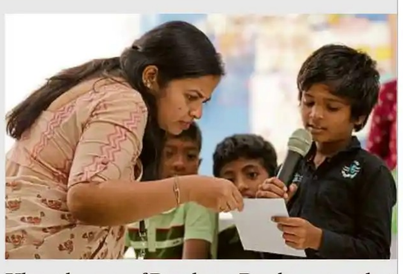
"Honna Kiranagi was once barren land, but Sadashiva transformed it into a thriving ecosystem and helped the poor become self-reliant. His clarity of purpose enabled him to achieve remarkable results despite numerous difficulties," he adds.

(If you are struggling with thoughts of self-harm or suicide, know that help is available. Please reach out for support at 14416 or 7893078930)

Stories rooted in vibrant milieu

A techie-turned-writer and publisher, **Anupama Benachinamaradi** is making local narratives accessible for young readers

Chiranjeevi Kulkarni



I once bent too close to a millipede and my breath made it curl into a tight circle. In that moment, I realised how important it is to be mindful of other beings. When I became a mother, I wanted my son to discover that same sense of magic," says Anupama Benachinamaradi. She wanted him to learn about local ecosystems and culture through stories rooted in his own surroundings.

Growing up in Beniwad in Belagavi district, Anupama saw the world as a web of symbiotic bonds. As she moved to Belagavi city to study engineering, she felt distanced from the meadows of her childhood. By the end of her MTech, nostalgia had deepened that longing. A stint as an assistant professor in Dharwad followed, before marriage took her to the US.

When she returned to Bengaluru in 2014, after two years in Texas, memories of her childhood flooded back. "I had just become a mother and wanted my child to experience the world I knew as a child, but that pastoral culture was distant from their reality and largely missing in accessible literature," Anupama says.

By then, she had quit teaching and begun writing science articles. But her child's hunger for knowledge — "a hundred questions for every line of a story I told him" — made her look for children's books.

In the US, she had seen entire sections of libraries and bookshops devoted to children's literature. Here, she found them relegated to a small corner. More importantly, literature that focused on local culture or contemporary themes was either scarce or poorly produced.

It was during the uncertainty and isolation of Covid that a sense of urgency to provide her child with better reading material drove her to write stories, drawing inspiration from her own childhood memories.

Snapshots

- Anupama launched Awwa Books in 2022, focusing on children's literature
- The books, in Kannada and English, are drawn from everyday experiences
- She runs workshops in government schools, giving children a space to express themselves

A platform for writers

However, a not-so-positive experience while trying to get her story published pushed her to think beyond the box. The result was Awwa Books, a publication house launched in 2022, where Anupama channels the magic of her childhood into engaging story arcs. It also serves as a platform for creators who can connect with a child's sensibilities. She makes a conscious effort to avoid imposing rigid morality, choosing instead to emphasise values.

In her book *Kempi*, a stray cow gets stuck in Bengaluru traffic, drawing the ire of motorists and shopkeepers. Putta, a boy selling flowers, offers her a banana and gently leads her to an open space. The cow thanks him with soft moos, and Putta feels the quiet joy of a good deed.

Awwa Books now has 12 titles, including two by external writers and one translation. Another book is in the works. Hema Khurshapur of Pratham Books notes that Anupama is one of the few Kannada writers addressing the critical need for quality children's literature.

"It is encouraging to see young mothers like Anupama and Vanita Yaji (another writer) stepping in to fill those gaps. However, I hope that they go beyond the curve to come up with materials with depth and richness, in terms of form and content," she says.

Awwa has sold over 7,000 books in the last four years, despite limited distribution networks. Anupama remains committed to introducing a variety of new materials and says Awwa aims to connect with children at a deeper level.

As part of that effort, she regularly conducts workshops for children in government schools, offering them a space to express themselves. "Every child has so much to say, but often no one listens. I want to give them an outlet and understand what they truly need," she says.

In November, Anupama worked with students from a government school as well as about 30 resource persons from the Azim Premji Foundation's programme to improve school education. Sheetal Kumar Malaganve, a participant resource person from Bagalkot, says Anupama's workshop resonated deeply with children.

"The workshop on creative expression was a live demonstration. Anupama reached even the shyest students. With her simple storytelling and careful attention to expression, she had every child brimming with stories by the end," he says.

Children's writer Anand Patil says Anupama needs greater exposure to children's literature in Kannada and other Indian and global languages to make her mark.

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Theatre with a conscience

Eclectic in approach, **Shakeel Ahmmad**'s plays challenge conventions and spark dialogue

Divyashri Mudakavi

As the curtains fell on Shakeel Ahmmad's solo play *For a Bite of Food* in Dharwad, the audience were in no hurry to disperse. A brief hush fell as they processed the performance, before conversations sparked about an individual's right to choose what they eat. Based on the Dadri lynching, the play's impact lay in the questions it raised, not in ticket sales.

Such responses have become the hallmark of 40-year-old director and actor Shakeel's plays, which often unsettles audiences while challenging citizens, politicians and institutions with uncomfortable yet thought-provoking questions about governance, policies, culture and society, reaffirming theatre's role as a public and political space.

Plays such as *Kodalla Andare Kodalla*, which addresses taxation and price rise; *Anamikana Saavu*, his adaptation of Athol Fugard's *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*; *Tindige Banda Tunderaya*, a satirical allegory on Adolf Hitler's rise to power, all reflect this intent.

"Shakeel's *For a Bite of Food* continued to trouble me for months after watching. It forces us to confront the legitimacy of killing someone over their choice of food," says noted theatre artiste Mangala N, adding that *Kodalla Andare Kodalla* offers a sharp critique of everyday economic anxieties.

Shakeel's strength lies in translating complex social questions into clear theatrical narratives. Through The Spinning Tree Theatre company, which he founded in 2015 in his village in Vijayapura, and his work with Nirdigantha and other theatre groups, he has developed a performance language rooted in body dynamics. Actor Dinesh Naik from his troupe says that their rehearsals focus on studying actors' movements and using local dialects. This helps actors achieve a naturalistic and truthful stage presence.

Snapshots

- Shakeel's plays challenge audiences with thought-provoking questions on governance, policy, culture and society
- He blends mime, Tai Chi and theatre techniques to help performers convey emotions effectively
- Though Shakeel has performed globally, he remains focused on the villages and small towns of North Karnataka

A rigorous physical training process reinforces this emphasis on authenticity. "Shakeel blends mime, Tai Chi and theatre techniques to help performers convey emotions effectively while maintaining breath control and balance," says Vishal, a movie actor.

Engaging directly with communal and political fault lines has often invited resistance. "At some venues, posters were removed, and at others, arguments broke out," Shakeel says. "But this is necessary—democracy needs dialogue, not silence."

Shakeel takes this engagement beyond the stage. After performances, particularly in colleges, he interacts with students. "They must understand their civic rights and question societal wrongs," he says.

His plays closely mirror the challenges he has faced in life. Hailing from a disadvantaged family in Loni B K in Vijayapura district, Shakeel was a bright student whose early theatre exposure came from school and village dramas. In pre-university, he felt alienated as he found it difficult to follow English in classes, and turned to films and theatre, discovering his interest in acting.

After a failed attempt to join the Film and Television Institute of India, he pursued a diploma in education in Mysuru, where he was influenced by prominent authors and theatre figures, making literature and theatre his main focus.

Following a brief teaching stint and a year of training at Ninasam theatre institute, Shakeel returned to school as a teacher. But he quit teaching in 2011 to pursue theatre full-time, driven by his passion and experiences of communal discrimination in the village where he taught.

Shakeel then toured Karnataka with various theatre groups before earning a scholarship at Singapore's Intercultural Theatre Institute (ITI), where he studied Asian theatre forms like Kutiyattam, Wayang Wong, Noh and Kunqu. "Ninasam taught me theatre grammar, ITI showed me that body movements matter more than language," he says.

Today, Shakeel has a Master's in theatre arts from the University of Kent and conducts workshops at Rangayana, Sanehalli and the National School of Drama. He has also worked as an actor and director with internationally acclaimed artistes such as Leela Alaniz.

Though Shakeel has performed globally, his focus remains on the villages and small towns of north Karnataka. "This region, rich in folk forms, is open to meaningful theatre. I want to rebuild artistes, audiences and performance spaces here," he says, noting theatre's enduring social impact.

Satish Tiptur, director of Rangayana, Mysuru, highlights the significance of Shakeel's journey. "He is bringing fresh ideas to theatre. A rare talent in Karnataka's theatre landscape, he is tackling every subject differently and experimenting with unconventional techniques beyond classical theatre," he says.

Acclaimed theatre personality S Raghunandana praises Shakeel for blending a strong sense of political responsibility with sharp language, qualities reflected in both his plays and the themes he chooses to explore.

Beyond the binary: From margins to impact

Arundathi Mandya is helping transgender persons reclaim their future by pairing livestock farming with the right to identity

Ashwin B M

On the Bengaluru–Davangere highway near Bharamasagara in Chitradurga stands Arundathi Mandya's farm. Here, she has built a thriving poultry and animal husbandry enterprise and created a sustainable model to help sexual and gender minorities.

Arundathi's journey is marked by rejection and sorrow. Born Arun in Dakshina Kannada, she faced confusion, alienation and taunts as her body began to change around age 10. Despite her mother's support, constant pressure from her brother to behave like a boy forced her to leave home after SSLC. Alone and uncertain at Mangaluru railway station, she met a trans man who took her to the Malabar Cultural Forum in Kerala, a trans-community organisation that supported her education.

Determined to earn a dignified living, she completed a Master's in Sociology in 2011 while working as a public relations person and a security guard. Subsequently, she returned to Karnataka and joined an NGO in Ramanagara, where she trained transgender persons in livestock rearing. The project ended in 2012.

When she sought formal work, societal prejudice hit hard. She spent six months applying to factories and garment units, only to be rejected because of her gender. Savitramma, an acquaintance, helped her find work as a shepherd.

She later began her own enterprise in Induvala village in Mandya with four lambs and, by 2019, had scaled it up. By then, other transgender people had also come and settled there. However, locals in the village drove her and other transgender residents out because of their gender identity.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, her sheep and hens were stolen, forcing her into sex work for three months. With the help of a friend who promised better opportunities and societal support, Arundathi moved to Chitradurga and restarted her livestock enterprise. Yet, when a theft occurred at her livestock farm in Chitradurga, it led her community and the police to distrust her. The situation took a severe emotional toll, and she even attempted to take her own life.

Soon after, Pushpalatha H, then managing director of the Karnataka State Women's Development Corporation, contacted her after hearing about her work and promised financial and training support. The corporation facilitated a loan of Rs 23 lakh with a 50% government subsidy. Arundathi then started a tea stall near Bharamasagara with the help of her friend Chaithra, a trans woman. With a loan and a business training fellowship, she rebuilt her farm, which now has 50 hens and 100 goats and sheep.

Pushpalatha says, "I am impressed by her skills and drive for self-reliance."

In 2022, Arundathi founded the Madilu Swavalambi Trust (South India) to anchor her livelihood support model. It now has 25 members. Arundathi provides two goats and five hens free to sexual and gender minorities who give up begging or sex work, with the understanding that they pass them on once they become self-reliant.

So far, Arundathi has provided poultry animals to 25 sexual minority people and trained 35 transgender persons in farming. Her work has inspired other transgender persons to start agricultural ventures in Koppal, Mandya, Vijayapura, Bagalkot and Chikkamagaluru.

Arundathi also helps her community resolve legal issues and secure identity documents such as Aadhaar, voter IDs and ration cards at no cost, enabling them to access services and entitlements. "Through our Samara Sarathi movement, we raise awareness about the right to identification and government benefits," she says.

Going forward, she plans to start a skill-training school in livestock rearing and agriculture, viewing economic empowerment as key to fighting stigma.

"Even today, customers often avoid our tea stall. Society disowns us, even if we work hard," she says and urges the government to set up a Transgender Corporation similar to the ones in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Megha Malnad from a trans-community group in Chikkamagaluru says, "The Trust donated us five goats. Anju grew her herd to 10 and gave five to Harshitha, who then passed five on to those in need. This ripple effect strengthens our community."

Bengaluru-based trans person Mallamma Kumbara says Arundathi inspires many to live with dignity and independence.

Snapshots

- Arundathi has trained 35 transgender persons in farming and helped 25 sexual minority people in livestock rearing
- She anchors her livelihood support model through Madilu Swavalambi Trust (South India)
- This economic empowerment model is emulated in at least five districts

(If you are struggling with thoughts of self-harm or suicide, know that help is available. Please reach out for support at 14416 or 7893078930)

A light against the wild

S R Ayan's startup has developed a predator-deterrent device to safeguard crops without harming wildlife

Barkha Kumari

The sun is setting over Ponnasamudra, a village of open plains and rocky hills in Karnataka's Tumakuru district. It appears unusually close and perfectly rounded. But Eranna isn't looking.

The farmer instead points to a lone deer moving along the far edge of his neatly lined chilli fields. Deer movement in the area has increased over the past three years, and roughly 30% of his crop would end up as deer dinner. He tried iron and stone fencing, but the animals quickly learnt to leap over them, knock them down, even. Patrolling the fields with a torch and imitating predator calls — could he do that all night? But today, he heads home with far less worry, thanks to Parabraksh, an agri-tech solution from Bengaluru.

It is deceptively simple and especially relevant in an age of growing human-animal conflict. It keeps both the crop and its wild visitors safe. In contrast, rigged *jhatka* machines (electric fencing) have reportedly killed many animals.

Parabraksh is a predator-deterrent light system developed by Katidhan, a startup founded by S R Ayan. The squarish device is fitted with LED lights on all four sides, and can run on either solar power or a built-in battery. It switches on automatically in pitch darkness and flashes white light in varying patterns for at least 150 metres. To animals, the light resembles the glowing eyes of a predator on the prowl or the beam of a torch held by a human—"threats" that make them back off from the farm, Ayan explains.

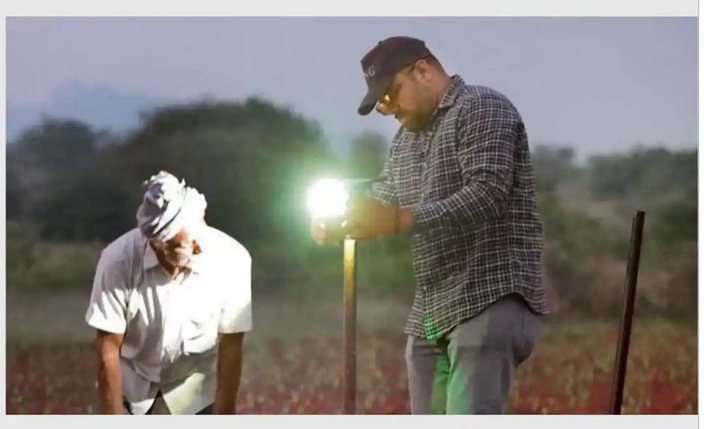
A call for help from a friend in Ladakh sparked his journey in 2017. Farmers were killing snow leopards that attacked their livestock. Both the vulnerable cats and the farmers' livelihoods needed protection. The first low-budget prototype of Parabraksh failed: its batteries and solar panels couldn't withstand the freezing mountain cold. "In the second iteration, the farmers reported that the footprints of snow leopards were farther from their livestock than before, a sign they were retreating," Ayan recalls. With proof of concept now in hand, Ayan invested Rs 10 lakh from his savings to 'start up'.

Today, around 3,000 units are in use across India, including Karnataka, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Ladakh. The customers include both individual farmers and forest departments.

The use cases have also diversified. In and around Bengaluru, the device is keeping wildlife at bay at farmhouses and resorts. The venture has since secured a Rs 1.5 crore commitment on Shark Tank India, won Karnataka's Elevate 2023 grant, and is now part of the Centre's agriculture subsidy programme.

A nine-month study by University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore is evidence of its appeal. The university found it 75-80% effective against deer and wild boar across different stages of crop cycles. The test was conducted on ragi, groundnut and maize fields in five locations of Karnataka. Though elephant deterrence was also part of the study's goals, Mohan Naik, head of the vertebrate pest management department, says that longer testing is needed to reach definitive conclusions. Meanwhile, Ashok Hainari, from Sesapani village in Assam, has observed a 60% drop in crop loss from elephant raids on his paddy and betel nut fields.

Parabraksh works. The business is bootstrapped but profitable. They get 10-20 enquiries a day and there is export interest from Southeast Asia and Africa. Yet Ayan can't celebrate. His five-member team is not able to meet even 1% of the demand. They are strapped for capital.



Snapshots

- Around 3,000 units of Parabraksh, a predator-deterrent light developed by S R Ayan, are in use across India
- A study found that the device is 75-80% effective against deer and wild boar across different stages of crop cycles
- Strapped for capital, his five-member team is not able to meet even 1% of the demand

Most of his customers can't pay the full price—Rs 10,000 a unit. "Small or marginal farmers in northern India can only spare Rs 500-Rs 1,000. Farmers in Karnataka are slightly better off and shell out up to Rs 3,000," he says.

Even the best ideas hit a wall with investors. He has met 50 investors and emailed 120 more. Only five have shown interest and even that is conditional.

More than a year after his product shot into the national spotlight, the Shark Tank funds still haven't arrived. He must bring in another investor to avail of the offer. Yet the reality show also pulled him out of his lowest phase of self-doubt. After the episode aired in March 2024, enquiries poured in well into the wee hours. "It validated how much there was a need for such a product," he recalls.

Ayan hasn't looked back since. To address affordability concerns, his startup is rolling out Parabraksh with a spectrum of price points and different capabilities. Installing electric fencing would cost Rs 2 lakh per hectare, whereas four units of their device can secure the same land for Rs 40,000.

The team is often stunned by how deeply the device touches lives. A woman farmer from Maharashtra says she and her husband no longer risk their lives guarding crops at night.

For Eranna and fellow farmer Gopalappa, crops saved means money earned, which they are now putting toward their children's education.

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Dignity and power in the periphery

Jabeena Khanum is training unorganised women workers to lead and claim what is rightfully theirs

Sujay B M

In May 2014, a reconciliation meeting at the Additional Labour Commissioner's (ALC) office in Davangere became a moment of reckoning for women beedi workers who had long been denied their rights as labourers. They stood their ground when contractors refused higher wages and a trade unionist dismissed their demands. When the ALC ruled in their favour, they knew they had won. This victory not only changed wage negotiations but also how the women saw and spoke for themselves.

At the centre of this shift was Jabeena Khanum, the daughter of a beedi worker who had grown up observing how women's labour was reduced to being seen as "timepass". The collective defiance displayed at the ALC office was the outcome of her decade-long efforts to organise and empower women from marginalised communities.

Snapshots

- Jabeena Khanum, the daughter of a beedi worker, has given voice to women beedi workers in Davangere
- In 2023, she founded the Dalit and Muslim Mahila Okkoota, which now has 700 members
- Women have moved beyond personal rights and local civic issues to engage in broader social and political campaigns

For 39-year-old Jabeena, trade unionism was never a childhood dream. Raised in a modest-income family, with a mother who rolled beedis and a father who drove an auto, she was inspired by her teachers and hoped to become one, but family circumstances forced her to discontinue studies after PUC.

She then began teaching at a school for child labourers in Old Davangere while also rolling beedis to help support her family's income.

As part of her work to bring children to school, she often visited marginalised and minority households where many women made a living by rolling beedis.

At first, many resisted her efforts, believing children had to work to support the family. Jabeena realised that empowering beedi workers to claim their rights could help their children escape labour and go to school.

Around 2004, she began exploring the works of Muslim women writers in Kannada after conversations with her fellow teacher M Karibasappa, deepening her understanding of women's issues within the community.

For a couple of years she worked at the school, after which she focused on forming women's self-help groups and training them to obtain birth certificates and other essential ID documents to access rights and services.

Initially, awareness focused on civic issues, but gradually they expanded their efforts to include labour rights, especially for beedi workers.

Jabeena formed the Neralu Beedi Workers' Union in 2014 and later registered it as a trade union in 2017 to formally advocate for their rights.

Nazima Banu, a union member for 10 years, says Jabeena helped them understand why they were paid low wages, took them to the labour office and gave them a voice. Another member, Nahera Banu, says she learnt to assert her rights at home too, despite initial opposition.

As women grew from strength to strength, contractors devised strategies to break their unity. Another union member Nagina Banu recalls that in 2016, the contractors tried to instigate beedi workers against Jabeena and threatened to stop giving the raw material if they remained with her. "We paid no heed," she notes.

Unionisation and regular campaigns have helped improve conditions in an industry notorious for low pay despite high profits. Previously, women earned as little as Rs 50–60 for rolling 1,000 beedis, and now earn around Rs 240 for the same work, yet large gaps remain.

Jabeena's parents and family members have been a constant source of support for her work. She also acknowledges Karibasappa's role in her journey. However, she notes, there was opposition from conservative sections within the Muslim community.

"When we were working with child labourers, there was no problem. Once we started forming self-help groups, we faced backlash from Masjid committees," Jabeena says. Resistance also came from families.

"When women go out, male relatives start asking when and where and question our conduct. We constantly have to prove ourselves. That is patriarchy trying to keep us within its bounds," she adds.

As women became more assertive, their situation improved and they began engaging in broader social and political campaigns. Through this empowerment, they gained freedom and the courage to assert their rights in everyday life. Jabeena notes that many leaders have emerged in the process. One such leader is Haseena Banu, who now actively fights against corrupt practices in hospitals.

In 2020, Jabeena and other union members formed the Muslim Mahila Okkoota, bringing together about 1,300 Muslim women on a broader platform. In 2023, they expanded their efforts by establishing the Dalit and Muslim Mahila Okkoota, which now has around 700 members.

Feminist activist Madhu Bhushan has watched Jabeena and her union grow in influence and says she is challenging both the stigmatisation of the Muslim community and conservatism within it. "She is keeping women's voices strong and focusing on their livelihood, dignity and rights. That is very important," Madhu says.

Teaching the joy of surfing

Surfers-turned-entrepreneurs **Tanvi Jagadish** and **Rohan R Suvarna** are nurturing a watersports culture in the coastal region

Naina J A

As dawn breaks at Thottam beach near Malpe in Udupi, a group of aspiring water sports enthusiasts—some nervous, some excited—paddles into the surf guided by their instructors. Among them, balancing effortlessly on their boards, are Tanvi Jagadish (25) and Rohan R Suvarna (33), founders of Kadal Surf School.

The duo has successfully leveraged local coastal resources and popularised water sports through entrepreneurship. From launching their surf school in October 2019 to training over 6,500 people today, the duo's journey has been remarkable. The school has five instructors and offers surfing, stand-up paddling (SUP) and kayaking lessons. What sets them apart is their deep community reach. They conduct ocean awareness and marine safety workshops in schools and colleges, and independently organise beach clean-ups and awareness sessions on the impact of plastic on aquatic life.

Rohan and Tanvi are internationally certified instructors in surfing, SUP and lifesaving, accredited by the International Surfing Association and International Life Saving Federation. Tanvi, a pioneer in Indian SUP, is a nine-time national champion and recognised as India's first professional female SUP racer. Rohan is a guest faculty at the National Institute of Watersports (NIWS) in Goa.

It has not always been smooth sailing for them. Their families initially resisted, hoping they would pursue "stable" jobs. While Tanvi faced some hesitation from her mother, Rohan experienced more of an awakening before embracing water sports. Today, they are not just instructors and champions—they have become role models.

Tanvi Jagadish

The duo has managed to bring about a mindset shift and create a culture of water sports in the coastal region. "Five years ago, people did not even know what SUP was. Now, they bring their children for training. Surfing has given them confidence, and helped develop communication skills, teamwork and discipline," Rohan remarks.

Although the sea was a strong physical presence for Rohan, born and brought up in Malpe, his foray into surfing came much later, after a job stint in Gujarat, following his post-graduation in Chemistry from Mangalore University. The monotony of the job and a longing for change brought Rohan back home.

Around this time, he came across an SUP camp in Mulki, which was a game changer. "My first instructor was Tanvi, who later became my guru. When I first stood on the SUP board, it felt like walking on water," he says.

He began practising rigorously and assisted Tanvi in conducting small SUP camps. The duo also travelled to Rameswaram for an internship in water sports. Shortly after returning, a relative offered Rohan a cafe space near Malpe beach to start a surf school. "We began with just two boards. Now we have over 25," he says.

Rohan has represented Karnataka and India in international SUP competitions. He has won a national bronze in SUP. He has also trained 500 people in lifesaving skills, including first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

NIWS Manager (Training) Ranjeet Singh says, "Rohan has been actively involved in training people in lifesaving skills, water sports and powerboat handling across India." Rohan has also worked with the NIWS team on feasibility studies of water bodies for water sports, helping state governments launch new initiatives.

Snapshots

- Tanvi and Rohan are internationally certified instructors in surfing, stand-up paddling (SUP), and lifesaving
- They launched a surf school in October 2019 near Malpe and have since trained over 6,500 people
- Through camps, around 100 children from local communities have learnt surfing and SUP

Rohan Suvarna

For Tanvi, the sea has always been a constant, shaped by her roots in a fishing community. She was introduced to surfing at the age of 10 by her cousin during summer vacations with their grandparents in Mulki. Later, she was trained at Mantra Surf Club in Mulki.

Tanvi was inspired to take up SUP, after watching April Zilg, an American stand-up paddleboard athlete and world champion, practise in Mulki. Later, she underwent training under April Zilg in the USA. At 14, she won gold in her first national-level SUP competition. At 16, she became the first Indian female surfer to participate in the 18-km ocean race at the International Surfing Association's SUP & Paddleboard Championships in Fiji and stood 16th in world rankings.

Beyond ticking off personal milestones, the duo has been training the younger generation in the hope that "at least some of them might take this up as a career." And they are well on their way to doing that. Take for instance, Nithin, a Class 10 student from Malpe. "Rohan *anna* introduced me to SUP, which I enjoy now, and want to pursue along with my studies. My parents, who are fisherfolk, support me too," he says.

Yashvi Poojary, a civil engineer from Udupi and an instructor at Kadal, credits Tanvi and Rohan for introducing her to the sport. "After training at Kadal, I won medals in sea kayaking and SUP at the national events in Machilipatnam in June 2025," she says.

Beyond sport, Rohan and Tanvi see Kadal as a bridge between adventure and awareness, tourism and tradition. More than building a surf school, they have fostered a coastal culture rooted in confidence, safety, sport and respect for the ocean.

From chalk to chip

Madhusudan K S is bringing excitement to the classroom with inventive teaching methods

Pushkar V

The bell has barely rung at Hinkal Higher Primary School in Mysuru. In one corner, children wearing VR headsets assemble a tiny car on a laptop screen, while another group waits eagerly as a 3D printer begins to take shape. At the centre of this buzz stands science teacher Madhusudan K S, who has turned an ordinary government school into a small innovation hub.

Madhusudan grew up in Kedaga, about 60 km from Mysuru, in a family where teaching was a way of life. His father, a strict mathematics teacher in a government school, shaped much of his discipline, even if the sport-loving son once wanted anything but a classroom.

He completed a BSc in Computer Science followed by a BEd and gradually realised that the classroom he once tried to escape was becoming his own playing field. He now holds a Master's in Economics.

Madhusudan began his teaching career in 2008 in a remote government school in Mysuru district.

For the next 11 years, he moved across rural schools, working with children from families where education often competed with farm work and household responsibilities. "Those years taught me to keep things simple and practical," he says.

In 2019, he was transferred to Hinkal Higher Primary School and set out to create a space where children could touch, break, repair and build, not just memorise. He began by asking a basic question: what should a child actually know to survive and live a meaningful life?

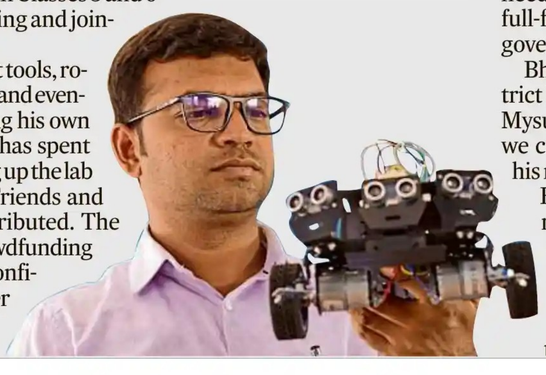
The answer became C Lounge—Camp, Create, Celebrate—a makerspace without a blackboard, resembling a workshop rather than a classroom. On one wall hangs a large wooden board made from scrap, neatly labelled with tools. The board was designed and built by students as part of an experiential learning project. Madhusudan uses it to teach carpentry basics, surface measurement and geometry. Maths moved from textbooks to pieces of wood, with children in Classes 5 and 6 learning angles by cutting and joining planks.

Madhusudan bought tools, robotics kits, VR headsets and eventually a 3D printer using his own savings. Over time, he has spent around Rs 6 lakh setting up the lab and related systems. Friends and well-wishers also contributed. The lab became a local crowdfunding effort that gave him confidence to attempt bigger projects.

His work is guided by a quiet obsession. Madhusudan read about global benchmarks and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which tests how 15-year-olds apply reading, mathematics and science knowledge to real-life problems. Norway's education system, with its focus on equity and skills, became a reference point.

Snapshots

- At Hinkal Higher Primary School, Madhusudan has created a space where children can touch, break, repair and build, not just memorise
- A 3D printer and an AI-enabled smart board familiarise children with advanced tools they might otherwise never encounter
- He has customised a learning management system and conducts digital literacy sessions for parents, many of whom are using these for the first time



Innovation extended beyond hardware. Madhusudan purchased and customised a Learning Management System (LMS). Through it, he tracks attendance using QR codes for 50 students, uploads scanned answer sheets, manages homework and conducts quizzes. Parents can log in to see lessons, monitor performance and revisit the answer scripts page by page. The LMS is a pilot project he hopes to scale.

He also conducts digital literacy sessions for parents, many of whom are using such systems for the first time. Almost all parents, he says, appreciate the effort to bridge school and home. "I had only seen VR headsets, robotics and smart boards on TV," says Preksha, a Class 5 student. Instead of memorising textbooks, she spends time in the lab doing activities.

Madhusudan, who received the National Teachers' Award in 2025, calls teaching a "high-stakes job" because it involves children's emotions.

Swetha C G, an English teacher at the school, says his technology-driven lessons inspire her to experiment.

Private schools have approached him, but he wants to remain in the government system. "These are the kids who need it most," he says. His next goal is a full-fledged robotics lab, open to nearby government schools.

Bhagyalakshmi A, a lecturer at the District Institute of Education and Training, Mysuru, has been following his work. "If we can find equally dedicated teachers, his model can easily be scaled," she says.

For a boy who once ran from classrooms to chase a ball, the journey has come full circle. Today, the lab is his playground, marked by tools, machines and the clatter of tiny wheels, and by children discovering what they can do with their own hands.

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